

# Approaches.

*BY*

*ARTHUR LYNCH*



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## APPROACHES



# APPROACHES

THE POOR SCHOLAR'S QUEST OF A MECCA

A Nobel

IN THREE VOLUMES

BY

ARTHUR LYNCH

*Author of "Modern Authors"*



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## AS DAYS WEAR ON.

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### CHAPTER I.

IN Mrs. Neville's tempestuous rage she had scorned all precaution, and in the costume in which she had left Llandeilo House, she reached home. She must make a confidante now of her maid.

She hated herself. How low a thing had she become. Where could she turn for solace?—Her wifely duty. That was a bitter stroke. Her books, her music, deserted her. To lie listlessly on the sofa and beat the carpet with her foot and gaze out of vacant eyes that had long since forgot to weep. Yes, she could do that.

Mr. Neville's affairs had occupied him much. His party had ousted the others and he had clutched his portfolio. This necessitated for him a new election. Meanwhile his business affairs had become complicated more and more. Shrewd man as he was he scarcely knew how he stood all round. His money, as he was accustomed to explain to casual friends who wished a trifling accommodation if it would not inconvenience him—"a mere trifle—just for a few days," was tied up. His business speculations occupied him much more than his legal practice. That in fact was not large.

He was the principal member of a company which had carried on a thriving trade in woollen mills. A great part of his capital was sunk in the project, and this, developed by his keenness in business and capacity for work, had grounded his fortune. A new invention however, had just been brought out and had been taken up by some enterprising speculators, and its appearance threatened him a rather serious outlook. If the new company were once successfully floated and had



capital enough to fairly push its business, he was, at a blow, almost a ruined man. The plant of his present business which represented over two hundred thousand pounds would be valuable as old iron, bricks and mortar—nothing more.

This blow would cripple all his other business which it is easy to understand demanded to be supported by a considerable reserve, for his investments at times were—if he were not Mr. Neville—somewhat risky. He was ready for the emergency; he would be a Massena of finance, and he had interested the doctor much in a little scheme of his which would turn defeat into victory.

That was in short to widen the basis of his own company, and absorb the new business into it. For this purpose he issued a prospectus to the gentle public by which new shareholders were to receive no less than 10 % of the first profits.

Ten per cent. ! re-echoed the Doctor, sitting back.

Yes sir, Mr. Neville continued calmly to explain, but there's a little provision—read

on—we can redeem the debentures again, at will. Now once we float this affair, and buy over this Newbury-Hyde invention thing, our profits are a dead certainty, no two ways about that, and once we begin to haul in the rupees, then we begin to call in the debentures too, twig?

The Doctor had been rubbing his spectacles vigorously and now held them up to the light, and seemed to see more clearly.

Yer a cute yin, he put it, laughing.

Mining, too, this able man speculated in largely. The business was congenial to the fibre of Mr. Neville. The ups and downs, the “bulling” and the “bearing” of the markets, that would wear out the heart of a nervous man with the fever and the fret was just the work he delighted in. The more so doubtless that he was one of the inner ring. It was his nod that helped to “rig” the market, that sent up shares with a “boom” or brought them down tumbling again “head over heels,” in that way so eminently mystifying to the diligent student of political economy who might have persuaded himself that the

value of a share had some dependence on the value of the mind. The connection was a very complicated one but Neville was supposed to know the vagaries of its curve.

Latterly, however, this interesting little business had given occasion for some serious thought. A "ring" was made against him. They were going to "corner" him. He had sold a large number of the Golden Stream Gold Mining Company, Limited, in a certain way not unknown to finance. That is to say he was to deliver these shares in six months' time. He never had the shares, never intended to have them. At the end of the six months the parties interested would simply take the difference of price per share, between the two dates, multiply this difference by the number of shares purported to be sold and the amount so obtained would go to the pocket of the lucky one. It was in fact a plain piece of gambling or wagering and the game depended on the relative "bulling" and "bearing" capacities of the players. It was Neville's business to knock down the prices

of the shares. He was the "bear." Bailey and Morton were the "bulls."

A new and very interesting little episode, however, had stepped into the ring. Bailey and Co. were men of capital and keen as hawks. They somewhat resembled that bird, but more the vulture. The hawk is a clean bird. One can, in a way, respect a hawk. However Bailey and Co. were, through agents, covertly buying up all the shares in the market. When the settling day in June came round, they would demand not money but shares. Neville would have to depend on the current market for these. In short he would have to buy the shares to give to Bailey and Co., from Bailey and Co's. own dummies, at the price of course they cared to fix, and that price, as they say in Mathematics, can be made "as great as we please."

This meant a "corner" for Mr. Neville. Was there no hope from "squealing" or a "let up" or some other fairy-godmother-like invention of the Stock Exchange—why then he's done for, knocked out, collapsed.

This it will be agreed was a thoroughly

interesting prospect as well as might force a weaker man than N. to harder work.

His next little business was a Coal Company. Coal had been discovered near Dudley in payable quantities. Meanwhile that city has always been supplied with coal from Newcastle and the Companies there had grown leviathanly rich. The matter stood then thus :

We can supply Dudley with coal at 20s. per cwt., d'ye twig ? The Doctor had always followed Neville's leads in speculation and those only, except in the case of the vineyards of Boree that were going to make him a millionaire "when the Phylloxera bursts up — "

Ay ! ay ! The Doctor was always pleasant and over his whisky even the grey features of commerce might have worn a rosy tinge.

Well the other fellows do it now for 22s.

Agreed, that's according to Cocker.

So we get the trade eh ?

This seemed feasible.

Mr. N. swallowed his whisky, drew his chair up, put his hand on the Doctor's leg.

Yes, if they're fools enough to let us. But they're not.

He then went on at great length to explain—the Doctor nodding as blandly as if he understood every point—that on account of the enormous wealth of the Newcastle Companies, they could afford to supply coal, for a number of years if necessary, even at a loss to themselves at such a price that they would undersell the projected “Port Landsell Coal Mining Company, Ltd.,” and leave no prospect of its resuscitating, raise their prices then, take revenge on the unsuspecting householder, and so rapidly recoup themselves. All these matters were set out with much detail, and it was pleasant to hear the Doctor's, Ay! ay! It smacked of lemon, hot water, and sugar.

Now, continued Mr. Neville becoming very interested, theoretical conclusions in matters of Government must give way to practical conditions.

The Doctor saw no reason why they shouldn't.

In short then if the Government were so

arranged that by protecting local industries—to wit Mr. Neville's Company—they would put such a tax on the “other covies,” as he humorously called them, that their particular “little game would all be up the spout,” so much then to the advantage of the good people of Dudley, including to be sure Mr. N. He was accustomed in his political speeches always to lay most stress on the happiness of the good people.

Now comes in the next thread that, interwoven, made Mr. Neville's affairs as interesting a tangled little web as in Sir Walter's couplet.

He was now one of the powers that be, had in fact just won that position, partly through wholesale-generosity in rewarding services, partly through persuading the good people, on this he laid much stress, that a certain Bill would be of great service to the country (and the Bill was chosen well)—that, however, a certain very wicked set of people, the Ministry then in power, must be disengaged from opportunities of wrong, their offices to wit, to the advantage of a certain

other very virtuous and high-minded band of men, in which it so happened he had the honour to be included, whose absorbing desire in life was to shower blessings on the good people.

Now further if he attempted by a political act to protect a company of which he was a member there were certain highly disagreeable and mean-spirited people who would impute to him the motives the darkness of their own minds fostered. He must be like Cæsar's wife. To this end he commissioned his brother, to whom he had lately done some friendly acts, to make the said investments for him. Under the circumstances we can see how no particular formal instrument certified all this. In fact he now began to be uneasy about it; he had no particular security.

In the midst of all this and other little matters his new election, necessitated by his having accepted office, was pending. He would be hard pressed, for this time he had only one opponent. All his affairs hung systematically together. He could beat the



“corner” if he floated the new company to buy in the Newbury-Hyde invention. He could float the company if the Port Landsell Coal Syndicate were likely to prosper. The Syndicate would profit, if an Act of Parliament gave it protection. An Act of Parliament would protect it if he were Attorney-General. He was Attorney-General, and having accepted office must go before the constituency for re-election again. He must carry every point, then he would emerge a millionaire, a colossus. He could then give the church many pillars and his ambition wings! He would hold the Law in the hollow of his hand. What might he not become? nay a perpetual exemplar to the rising youth, the hero of many a goody goody book, a successful man, a pillar of kingdoms, a wielder of the Gospel of Wealth. He was looming up like a commercial Napoleon.

Did he fail, in one stroke—Erebus.

He was a stout man. He toiled like the veriest drudge, talked matter of fact, and, for the strain was great, drank whisky.

Such a man had little time to bestow upon a sentimental wife, and to be sure he had not hitherto "in that line" done much. Now jealousy with its tortures began to add to business wear and tear. Yet he was a "live man," and built upon the main chance.

Meanwhile he must unloose some money. Money could do anything in this world and he must at every hazard make sure of his election. He had appealed to his brother. Samuel too was waxing rich and began to lift his heels. The lack of all security—h'm, h'm, he muttered occasionally. He was becoming circumstantial.

Mr. Neville was desperate with rage and many other exhausting feelings. His wife had been Samuel's "good angel"—or at least Samuel had said so often enough. Therefore Mr. Neville choked down his jealousy—the occasion for that had disappeared of late—and took his wife into his confidence for once.

Mary, said he, I want you to do a piece of business for me. I must get hold of some

ready money now and somehow I think you could manage the business better with Samuel than I could myself. Come into my study and I'll show you how the matter stands.

Wretched as she was, his wife found a relief even in this from the cankers that were gnawing her soul. Yes, she would do her best and would apply to Samuel.

He too had laid his plans, and he too had a wife.

My husband is not at home at present—but he makes me thoroughly acquainted with all his affairs, said Mrs. Samuel Neville. What is the nature of the business?

I would really like to see Samuel, if you would be so kind, a few minutes personally. There are certain matters that we would understand that it would be difficult to explain to you. I beg, Irene, you will kindly give him my message.

No, answered Irene, I scarcely think you have a right to assume that I do not possess my husband's confidence or he mine. All people are not situated alike, and perhaps un-

consciously her eyes fell significantly on her sister-in-law.

That lady had become used to insults of late, still at this moment certain past relations may have struck upon her mind.

I would willingly rejoice in your happiness she said, looking up very calmly—the more so, as I made some efforts to promote it.

What ! cried Irene in a rage, I know what that vile insinuation means. You dare to take seriously what my husband once jestingly said to you and cast that in my teeth ! No, I think I know how to conduct myself at least and preserve—a proper prudence, in my carriage, and her eyes again fell very maliciously.

Mrs. Neville drew a very deep breath. Her face was a little white. She bowed seriously, silently, and departed. The houses of Matthew and Samuel were at daggers drawn, and then perhaps the little circumstance came home to both,—really no security.

Time slipped by. There is something impressive in that. But not greatly distressed

about the "burthen of the mystery" at least Mr. Neville toiled resolutely on.

The election had been fought. He was again the victor. He was a Colossus.

Money, sir, money will do anything! His affairs had been at a crisis, with that stroke he had surmounted them and would hold them in his bulldog grip. He was elated, but in the hour of his intoxication the colossus was smitten to the earth.

Money had done too much. The last time as he explained to the Doctor with all the graphic picturesqueness that such a man commands the others were in the same boat. This time they were not. They "laid for him" as they with graphic picturesqueness had described it. Mr. Neville had bribed. He had bribed a spy of theirs. They had the proof.

A process was instituted. Mr. Neville moved every atom of his power, and drank whisky more than ever.

Meanwhile too Mrs. Neville had passed through a critical condition.

The mother pale and weak had trembled

on the verge of death—a little girl it was—then gradually got better ; then as she pressed her pale lips to the cheek of the fluttering being that lay upon her breast, and felt with a strange joy, and with its privilege the full tide of love rush now upon her soul—day by day she gathered strength. She had something to love, something to yield up self for now.

Mr. Neville, too busy, perhaps for certain other reasons, had displayed no great emotion, but the grimmest silence, over this event—and such was the state of affairs as the mother, still very weak, sat in the arm-chair in her room with the child upon her breast.

The door opened and Mr. Neville entered and although it was still early in the afternoon there was a stagger in his walk ; and his face was bloated, his eyes bulging, and altogether he looked very unhealthy.

He had been hit hard all round. Ruin stared him in the face. He seemed scarcely to know what he had to say, but advanced meanwhile. She looked up in some surprise.

He tried to take her baby. Let me see the child. How is it getting on?

She had shrunk involuntarily and made a movement to protect the infant from his hands.

Won't you let me see it, eh? This is your wifely duty, is it?

I say, my ears have been filled with talk about this child. I want to see it, what it looks like. Here let me see.

He seemed excited—a half-drunken sort of excitement.

She stood up and kept the child away from him.

I say, I don't like that. You, Your prudish manners, Your delicacy, eh? Your refinement, your sentimental wishwash—

She was deadly white but did not answer. Her silence seemed to irritate him.

Your paramour—that boy—that womanish faced boy, curse him. Yes, brave it out. You were a little more modest or pretended to be when I took you from your mother's house—without a penny. What would you a' been if I hadn't married you, eh? Took

you here, gave you position, gave you luxury, gave you dresses, gave you jewels, and for what! . . . And this is your return, your gratitude, your wifely duty?—delicate chick. Where's your gratitude?

She spoke. Gratitude! you ask me that. Gratitude for what, forsooth? You took me penniless from my mother's house—and gave me what? Yes, you gave me luxury—you gave me dresses—you gave me jewels—but—you gave me—and the blood rushed to her face—you never gave me one pure word of love—a look of true affection, never once! Sensual beast! I was your plaything first. You took me from my mother's house before I could know my mind, a foolish girl, entreated by more foolish parents—forced—moved by all of what they called and I believed my duty. O God, that I could have seen it then. I would have borne—what would I have been you say? I would rather have left my very home, worked for a pittance, a sewing girl, I would have toiled in drudgery, I would have rather begged for bread that I might live, than stand there as



I did to give my hand to one I could not love.

Her strength had given out. Overcome with passion, with effort, and her own delicate state at once, she sank beside the bed. She did not faint though, and she pressed the child while she sobbed, to her bosom.

Mr. Neville looked stupidly, half drunkenly around, left the room, muttered something incoherent to the nurse about her mistress being ill, and descended to the courtyard.

His carriage was already waiting. He was stepping in, made an effort, tried to hold by the coach door and fell violently upon the ground. He had a paralytic stroke.

There was consternation in the house. Dr. Charlwood was sent for in hot haste. Mrs. Neville waited for him outside the room, saw his face very serious, and begged he would tell her the outright truth.

He thought it well to do so ; told her that there was no hope of his recovery, that his seizure was of a kind that invariably grew worse, that it was in short a matter of a few days now.

His wife nursed him attentively.

She had enough to do. She was very weak herself, and had the child to attend to; but she did her duty, and a great deal more, unflinchingly. Her spirit kept her up.

At length he too in reply to his urgent demands knew that his hours were short.

Repeatedly he had urged his wife to leave him and take her needful rest. It distressed him that she did not. He bade her, for the child's sake, go: I see you growing paler and paler every day.

What her feelings were we do not know; she remained at her post. And so it was one afternoon after he had been ill about a fortnight, they were left in the room together, she standing near the bed.

Mary, said he calmly and in a softer tone than he had ever used before, I know that I am dying now. It is probably only a question of hours with me. Mary, I have wronged you. How blind I have been. How plain everything seems to me now; could it have been otherwise? He seemed to be speaking to himself. My business affairs, Mary, have

become so complicated that no one could have saved them but myself. That chance is gone, and now your prospects are of the worst. I need not reproach myself with that now. It can't be helped. I will arrange to do the best I can. You yourself are not fit to attend to any business now. I will leave the business in the hands of the Doctor who is a true friend to you. How it will stand I don't know myself.

Send for him at once, leave the room. You can see me after that is done. Remain with me then till I die, Mary. I feel how cruel I have been when I see you now with this nursing made so pale and sick. Forgive me, Mary. God bless you and bless your child. Leave me now, Mary.

He spoke with pauses but on the whole with great calmness. She was almost broken down.

Mr. Neville entered into a detailed but perfectly explicit account to the Doctor as to what he wanted him to do. He had evidently thought the whole matter over and with a mind trained to business habits

had arranged it all methodically. He drew up a will in simple form, and had it attested.

There, said he, what will be left out of the wreckage I don't know. Enough I hope to give her at least a competence. Send for Martha.

Martha was one of the servants. She had been nurse to Mrs. Neville in her infancy, and had come with her on her marriage here. The dying man entered into a brief explanation to her as to the state of affairs. Begged her to remain in any case with her mistress.

Poor girl, he said, she has need enough now of care and love. The tears were dimming his eyes, but he was not used to that business.

He mastered himself in a moment.

There had been no need to have given Martha his last particular injunction. She loved her she had nursed as a child better than her own flesh and blood.

I do not shrink from death, he added after a pause.

I regret to leave my affairs in such a muddled state—to leave my wife and child in

so bad a plight. Send for her, Martha. No, wait a moment and give me a glass of whisky there before you go. He drank the whisky, raised his hand to his mouth, and in that moment died.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Neville had a very long obituary notice in the papers—longest in the protectionist organ. He was there celebrated for his good works, public and private. His energy, his force of character, his personal weight, his abilities, his unselfish devotion to the cause, were flattered to the skies. He was held up as a pattern for the rising generation. His career was detailed at length as an example of the power of single-minded determination; his zeal in the service of the Church made manifest; his generous donations to all worthy objects, duly chronicled, one or two amiable anecdotes related of him, and peace was said to his ashes.

His affairs had turned out more badly than he himself had expected.

Mrs. Neville, after all the Doctor's exertions, was left with the merest pittance—a

couple of cottages and a little ready money in the bank. Worn out to the last extremity, sick, body and soul, to one of the cottages the mother with the child removed, keeping Martha alone of all her servants, saving the piano from the sale of all her furniture. She did not give way. She had something to love now; something to give her heart for. Yes, and as she pressed again and again, while she sobbed with the passion of her love, the child's cheek to her lips, she cried to herself that there was something to live for here. Easier had it been to sink away in her weakness. No, no. That would not be. Here was something dearer than death, than life, than self.

For the rest the Doctor was very kind, and Mrs. Charlwood was far more considerate towards her, far more solicitous that they should still be friends, than ever. Mrs. Wilton did her best to make her cheerful.

You have borne up well, she said, you are growing stronger every day. Now you mustn't let us lose sight of you, you know, or betake yourself into a cloister or live as

still as if you were in one, which is pretty much the same thing. You are too accomplished and good looking a little widow for that, you know, and she smiled buxomly.

Mrs. Neville shook her head gravely, pressed the child's cheek to hers and remained silent.

Their relations continued friendly. Mrs. Neville visited them never, then they her but seldom.

## CHAPTER II.

MEANWHILE the year was speeding on. Gills was doing his best to fulfil the high anticipations his friends were forming of him. He and the handsome Clive were inseparable, and very notable personages in their own particular world.

Gills was now a stout drinker, so was the handsome Clive. Rare fellows at ninepins they were not, but both could make a pretty difficult "cannon off the cushion."

Gills was a famous gambler now, so was the handsome Clive. They had sat once, it was averred, with Adams and Wilson, all one blessed Sunday through and far into the Monday too at euchre. Gills considered himself a great favourite with the ladies of his acquaintance, so did the handsome Clive.



These things bring men together with a friendliness almost otherwise unknown—at least such was a belief in this famous seat of learning in the Golden Age of culture. The exploits of both were much chronicled, though their deeds loved not the “garish sun.”

The Cup, the great race of the year, was the talk once more. The fact that Joseph had asserted that Gills didn’t “know a horse from a cow” did not prevent that hero from speculating daringly.

Joseph’s statement was in fact too unreserved. Gills did know the difference. They had a cow at home. The rubicund youth had often stroked its head, and given it cabbages to eat, and stood looking at it with his arm round his sister’s waist. The eagle must soar and a man who could lose money on “the Turf” might rightly well despise a cabbage-eating cow; Gills did. He had read up zealously the past records of racing, had become so familiar with the peculiar technical terms in this interesting literature, that even Adams and Wilson were

inclined to be concessive. He had, too, cultivated a particularly knowing look.

I suppose you know your way about Town now, Gills, a friend from the country had once said to him.

None better !

Well, what's the latest about the Cup? said Langden who occasionally condescended to "drop in" on Gills.

It's anybody's game at present, replied Gills oracularly.

How's Sweetmeat?

A stiff'un this trip, but there's Frying Pan—a clever stable you know, whipped them in at Caulfield, but he'll have something to say when all's said and done. There's a quiet pot on, and his anchor's atrip this time, you'll see. He always runs for the books.

Well how about Quackery?

Quackery, not in the hunt. He's an outsider.

Yes, said Langden mysteriously. He evidently had something to communicate. Yes, but a dark one. You know George

Turnbull the footballer—no, he was before your time.

Damn it ! I know him well. He used to play for the blues and keeps a tobacco shop where Monty and I get our weed.

Clive who was puffing away quietly nodded.

Well, his wife doesn't know a mortal thing about horse racing, hardly knows a "horse from a cow" (the discrimination of these animals seemed to have been a favourite test of ignorance) and one morning she says to George, Is there a horse named Quackery in the Cup?

Yes, says he, how did you know that? Somebody must have told you.

No, says she, but last night I was dreaming about the Cup and dreamt that a horse called Quackery had won—a little horse. Well Quackery isn't a very big horse, you know, and these racehorses look smaller to woman than they are, you know.

Gills was listening with marked attention. No he wasn't a very big horse, he acknow-

ledged. She described the colours of the jockey, blue body, red cap.

But they're not Quackery's colours—he belongs to Purves—red jacket, white sleeves.

Langden actually winked.

Well now they say—I heard it myself, you can depend on my authority—Quackery's been secretly sold to Josh Brander.

The fat youth nearly fell off his chair, Great snakes! he cried, springing to his feet, and his colours are—blue body, red cap.

Langden sat back.

I took a double on it myself, Derby and Cup. 100 to 2, Torchlight, and Quackery. What do you think?

Gills meditated deeply. I don't like Torchlight. They say he can't stay. Quackery right out is 15 to 1.

Yes, but the odds are getting shorter every day. You had better pop it on at once, if you are going to. 15 to 1.

15 to 1, h'm. 15 to 1, h'm. 15 to 1. If I take £20 worth of Quackery then, 15 to 1, that's nought put a nought, two fives are ten

carry one, two ones are two, and one are three. £300!

This vista of wealth dazzled him and his mind already ruminated in imagination on what he could do with £300. Champagne, by Jove! and Fanny Nightingale—these were the principal figures of his poetic vision.

If I only had the lucre, I'd do it. If I only —

Langden left, somewhat hastily. He didn't like to keep Romanoff waiting.

Gills became more confidential to Clive when Langden was gone.

I always had a fancy for that Quackery, said he mysteriously. I don't know what it was gave it to me, for he hasn't done much yet.

Perhaps they're keeping him dark.

Yes. I believe it's a moral this trip. I wonder who layed Langden on.

Oh he and Romanoff know the touts and they don't mind dropping a hint now and then. Well, pop it on.

But I'm cleaned out, Monty. Haven't a

stiver, you know that yourself, and you're as bad as I am. I made a fiver altogether out of that money the governor sent me for books. The church money wasn't much and I lost that at Wilson's at Yankee Grab. Wilson is a demon at that game. I owe my tailor a tenner that the governor doesn't know anything about. Fanny got that."

Fanny Nightingale was the little lady for whom Gills considered that he had a great deal of affection. Their meeting was quite romantic, for one evening Gills and Clive were "seeing life" in town and had drunk much beer. The night waxed late, more beer was drunk, but Gills had no intention of surrendering. He was inflamed with the absurd desire to drink Clive down. Clive he had noticed drank whisky, and he began on whisky now.

It was the case of the frog and the ox over again. Clive laughed good-naturedly, and rather patronizingly. Gills drank now with zeal and effort. Others came, they had a "drink all round," and then a "doch-a-dorris," and much encumbered by Gills'

erratic movements proceeded to find their way home. They had not gone far, however, when Gills fell down in a helpless heap.

It was very funny; but as he could not get up Adams examined him, and pumped out the laconic words "alcoholic poisoning." Fanny's house was close at hand. When Gills woke up to consciousness of the things of this life he found himself diligently attended by a fair houri, who sat at his bedside. It was Fanny. He remained there three days until he had recovered. Full of gratitude and other mixed feelings the free-handed Gills had given her his "tenner."

Well ask Fanny herself to lend you the money. It's a dead certainty and she can go you whacks in the £300. Fanny would do it like a shot, I know. We'll go down and see her. Eh?

Gills hesitated—but £300 already in his grasp. He always had a sort of fancy for that Quackery, he kept reiterating, and £300 as good as made . . . and, Yes £300, . . . and he always had a fancy for Quackery.

Yes he'd see Fanny at any rate, perhaps—

Come on then.

Fanny resided in Museum Street, in a little two-storied house, neat enough in the exterior. It was about three in the afternoon. The day being warm Fanny had not yet dressed herself. She laughingly made some excuse to them for being in *deshabille*, but Clive assured her that that particular costume was really the one that set off her charming figure best. Fanny smiled. Gills opined that her face was better than her figure.

He didn't put it quite so nicely as Clive would have done, nevertheless delicacy was not indispensable. The talk became very lively, a good deal of beer was drunk, and Clive with much embellishment related the wonderful story of the Quackery dream, and approached in a more or less gingerly way the subject of their own particular, and at this conjuncture, highly inconvenient pecuniary embarrassments.

Fanny was much struck by the Quackery dream.

Gills murmured that he always had a sort



of hankering for that Quackery, he didn't know what had given him the impression.

Fanny herself related some stories of the prognosticating power of dreams. It was really very wonderful.

Fanny was a girl of about two and twenty and not at all remarkable for figure although Clive had said so. In fact she was very slight and delicate looking. Her face was pale, features refined, her hair light brown, and looking into the blue eyes, and at the almost girlish figure, one would require to be a very expert physiognomist to guess how fearfully depraved was her nature.

Fanny might possibly have been willing to have lent the £20 but girls of Fanny's class are not of a saving disposition.

Fanny did not happen to have £20 nor £10 nor, so she said, even £5.

Gills and Clive consulted, and finally after exhausting the borrowing capacity of both, after "popping" everything they could spare (the watch was already "popped," Gills was going to get it out with the £300), and after receiving from Fanny finally an addition of

£5, Gills was at length in a position to be sure of winning £300.

He talked of little else but Quackery,—the dream day by day growing more wonderful, —and the £300. Gills was so confident, and at the same time so hard up for money, that he had even approached Joseph on the subject with a view to interesting him.

Gillie you're a bigger fool than I thought you were, replied the worthy Joseph, and puffed sedulously at his pipe and looked as if he could say something but wouldn't because he had no charge of Gillie now. This made the infatuated Gills more certain. Joseph's restraint was not to be tolerated by a man who had long ceased to be a Freshman, and his protest now took the form of insisting on the Quackery dream more than ever and declaring mysteriously —

Well, we'll see, that's all ; we'll see. H'm. Quackery.

There were many other incidents that increased his faith.

Quackery's number was 33 on the card. He took a cab home late one night, and it's

number was 33. The odds against Quackery were now 10 to 1 and Gillie noticed one evening that there were exactly ten fellows talking about Quackery in his room. He had gone out to see the horses training one morning, and the first horse he saw was Quackery.

If you ask any goose in the street who's going to win the Cup his reply is Quackery, said Kithdale Brown, somewhat elaborately bringing out a joke.

Ask any goose in the room, said Joseph pointing with his long churchwarden pipe at Gills, who muttered, Well, we'll see, that's all, we'll see.

Gills had already laid out his plans for the disposal of the £300.

Fanny was to be treated like a duchess.

Meanwhile Gills had received a cheque for £15 from his father. The ostensible purpose was to pay his board and lodging, some clothes he had had lately made, and boots. Gills, his good sisters observed, was beginning to wear out boots at an enormous rate.

Be that as it may, boots were included in the £300.

What to do with the money? It might possibly have struck him at another time to pay his board and lodging, the clothes he had had made, and the boots. No. That could all come out of the £300.

Fanny too had heard of the £15. She was "hard up" for money, she declared most piteously. She was shamefully rackrented. She generally was. She wanted a new dress to go to the races in. All the other girls were getting new dresses. She reminded him, that it was she had helped to make up the £20 with which he was about to win £300.

Still he remained somewhat obdurate. He prided himself on his will power. He had once drunk nearly a gallon of beer at a draught to show his will power.

Then a bright thought struck her. She would only spend £5 for a dress, and with the other £10 she too could win now £100. Gills reflected. No. He would only give her

the five and he himself would invest £10 for her.

She would have to give him back the £5 though if he lost. She declared by all that was sacred that she would not fail.

But Gillie dear, and she pleasantly chucked him under the chin and kissed him, don't talk of losing—there is no fear of that. So that business was settled satisfactorily and Gills went away contented.

The Derby was over. Torchlight had won. Langden came to see Gills again.

Well you wouldn't have anything to do with Torchlight, but he pulled it off you see. That's my first leg in.

Are you going to hedge?

Not a stiver, said Langden stoutly, and this made Gills more confident than ever.

The eventful day arrived. Austin had gone out with Crossley, but they met Gills, Clive, and several others on the course.

Everything was gay, nay brilliant, and the day was beautiful.

The crowd was immense. The motley

paraphernalia of a racecourse, the unceasing types of character, the ladies in summer attire, graceful, bewitching, the business of the day, its lively incidents, the racing, all kept one in a simmer of amusement and of interest.

This was all but the merest child's play to Gills. The Cup was the thing. His mind was fixed on that and, dressed in a remarkably flashy style with check breeches and with a field glass slung across his shoulders, he followed the others, in a mechanical way, about. He had drunk much during the day but his lips were always parched and his throat dry.

And the bell for saddling up had rung. He looked at no other horse but Quackery, and he looked at Quackery not with Crossley's critical eye but blankly.

The horses went through the gate to the course one by one and Crossley passed a running fire of criticism for Austin's benefit. That's old Acteon that won last year. See the lazy old wretch stretching himself. But he'll be in yet. That little chestnut is Gas-

works—a regular daisy trimmer with a beautiful swinging stride but the distance will find her out. That fellow playing up there is Rhoderick Dhu, and that one that lashed out so viciously with his heels is Plato. And as they filed out on to the course Crossley named them. Volo, Feu d'Artifice, no, no filly to-day, View Halloo, Le Faineant, the Rupert lodge polish, Harkaway, Stebbings up, ha! ha! Zuleika, she's skittish, Pocahontas, Mountaineer in a lather of sweat, Billton leading Early Morn, he has a brute of a temper, Mad Cap, eh?

What an eye—see. By Jove, he looks around upon the field like a victor now, a Cid.

A coal black colt it was that had stopped, and was standing poised a moment with foot upraised, slowly turning the head as though viewing the *tout ensemble*, the arena of his glory.

Oh said Crossley laughing, there you go. Troilus. He's a plum of his style, but—he had clutched in his pocket a £5 note that he had yet to “lay” and shaken his leg un-

easily. H'm, h'm, with a grumbling unwillingness, no, no, give me a horse with wear and tear in him—Rhadamanthus, there's a cut and come again look about him. H'm. Ah, there's Quackery, that low set beast with the peacocky step.

Austin looked—a stout little horse, well ribbed up, good crest, “peacocky step.” He's in too good company this time though, said Crossley.

It was a splendid sight, the wide campaign, the green field, the hundred thousand people of the motley crowd, on the flat, the lawn, the stand, the thronged hill; then on the course, the field of thirty-five, the polished coats, the silks of the jockeys glancing in the sun. The horses were got ready for the start, broke away two or three times, and then every man holding breath, “they're in line,” down struck the flag.

They're off burst out of fifty thousand throats, and the living mass came charging almost like a solid phalanx on. The rumble from the hoofs came through the earth, and



through the air, rolling through the crowd like a tide.

Quackery led. Look how Huggins lets him fall to pieces, quoth Crossley. Wasted too much to come down to the weight.

Quackery, Quackery, Quackery, roared Gills and twenty thousand others from the fall of the flag with might and main.

Swifter than the whirlwinds that they raised the flying squad was sweeping round by the river side, now to the back of the course; little was visible but, through the dust, the moving and changing checkered field of colour—blue body, red cap, blue body, red cap—what odds about the others, cerise, and magenta, and green, Troilus, Le Loup, Rhadamanthus.

Gills' face was purple, distended, his eyes were gorged, and his whole mental energy and consciousness were absorbed in the one idea, while his lungs and throat mechanically bellowed, Quackery! Quackery! Quackery!

And still the field more separated now, moved on, undulating past the river bend, past the training sheds, now round the turn

that would lead them into the straight run home. It was too far to see distinctly with the naked eye. Gills had his field glass up. He saw Quackery sweep first into the straight, a length, a length ahead, blue body, red cap! blue body, red cap! the flails were out and whipping like mad. Quackery is challenged by crimson! cerise! racing up, twenty more at their heels; his jockey calls! blue body, red cap! and while the mighty crowd roared, Quackery, he forged ahead again, blue body, red cap! blue body, red cap! they sweep on, Quackery headed again, cerise! crimson! blue body, red cap! cerise! crimson! an effort, red cap! a terrible plunge, blue body, red cap! cerise! crimson! a broken down stride, puce jacket, white sleeves, gold bars, green body, spots and black cap!—Quackery was lost—for the whole charge had rushed on, and Gills' dream was left pumped out and belaboured down in the ruck.

The race was over.

Gills was staring blankly at the horses now; his eyes looked dead, dark rings underneath, his face a ghastly grey, his mouth

wide open, neck bent forward, and his head shaking as if he had the palsy. Some were throwing up their hats, others jumping on them for joy, and the crowds were rushing in thousands to the fence past which the horses would walk to the weighing, to catch a sight of, and hail with cheers, the winner.

Clive looked at Gills, tugged his arm. Gills did not speak. He seems hard hit, said Crossley.

Hard hit he was, he scarcely knew whither he went, or wherefore.

Where are you off to, Gillie? cried Summerville as the dreamer moved past him, there are other races yet.—Other races yet!

Gills did not heed, the words seemed divested of meaning, to get away, to escape from the place was all that possessed him.

He was not noticed. There were too many like him, and wildly worse than Gills. Men who had embezzled, men who had forged, men who had robbed, to get the money to bet on Quackery, men who had staked their last mad hope of redemption on a racing stable's honesty or luck, men who saw the

gloomy walls of prison in the near anticipation, men who would seek escape in laudanum, the sharp pistol shot, the dark flowing water, men who had sounded the fearful depths of vice, folly, crime, all wickedness,—men of the turf.

Thoughts of the Yarra, the waters closing over his head, anything, but the thoughts of meeting human beings were driving Gills on.

The Yarra was a long way off, however, and excited though he was he slacked his pace; his style of living in spite of the inordinate sums paid for boots had not been favourable to long continued exercise. He began to tire, to become distressed, to be worn out body and mind, he diverted his track and wretched and faint and sick dragged himself homeward, and went upstairs to his room and locked himself in.

He came down late to dinner. He thought the others looked at him quizzically. His face had still the ashy grey look, his eye looked dull at first, and the black rings were showing out conspicuously. He felt this and

he laughed boisterously. He was "in merry pin" most certainly that night. He laughed at every joke, laughed when there was no joke, laughed at the description of the Cup race, laughed at Quackery, laughed at the dream, laughed at his liabilities, laughed at his meagre prospects, very much. As my Lord Verulam says of His Gracious Majesty, King James the First, "he had a marvellous pleasant wit."

Mrs. Hart, his landlady, to be sure, did not enter into the full spirit of his pleasantry. But then these people never have any humour.

She had in fact been rather pressing—these people have no sense of delicacy at all, Gills was provoked to think—about her particular part of the £15. He was going to pay all that out of the £300, only—, and at last she had taken the liberty of writing in some detail to the gentleman whom Gills was accustomed now to call his "Governor."

Well, Gillie, don't give way old man, said Clive when they were alone after dinner. It's a facer but we'll show them that we can come up smiling all the same.

Clive's elegant metaphor from the lore of the prize ring encouraged Gills to attempt a pleasant look.

We'll make a night of it at any rate, said Clive bravely.

But to make a night of it involved the use of money, and they had no money.

Well we can go and see Fanny at any rate.

To be sure, Fanny was to give him back by all that was sacred her part of the £15.

They repaired thither,—found Fanny in all the glory of a new red dress, a new parasol, 8-button gloves, and a very extraordinary hat. Her lips were painted red and her cheeks were thickly powdered. This was surprising for as Clive assured her she had a very good complexion. I suppose I know my business best, she said, in reply, rather sharply.

“None but the brave deserve the fair.” But then the difference between bravery and foolhardiness is, certainly, success. Fanny was inclined to be reserved; a bit nasty, Gills afterwards declared. The desperate young man had broached the subject

of the £15 and her own asseverations of her readiness to pay it back, in which asseverations, however, he might have known that there was much that “cometh of evil.” But he had forgotten these matters lately, had “popped” as he called it the neat little Testament his sisters had given him,—as a joke, for he got next to nothing for it. Fanny tossed her head.

A nice thing coming to ask me for £15! It would be more like if you had the £100 you used to talk about so much to give me. You know you told me it was a certainty. I haven’t got the money or any money, and besides I have no time to talk to you now, I’m expecting every minute a friend of mine to come and take me to the theatre.

This loss of favour gave the finishing touch to Gills and the friend being announced at that moment Gills was in no mood to be amiable.

The friend was Monsieur Alphonse, a French young gentleman, small, dark, sallow, with hair cropped short, moustache brushed *à la* Charles the First. The French young gentle-

man had much to make him happy. His smiling countenance anticipated pleasure. He was gay, he was dressed *à la mode*, he was much bescented, he was going to the Opera. There had been much talk, at least, between them of love, or rather *l'amour* that which Fanny had learnt as the French equivalent of love. The Frenchman looked at Gills and Gills looked at the Frenchman. Fanny seemed shrewdly inclined to prefer the Frenchman. He had not won £300 on this eventful day, it is true, but then he had not lost fifteen. Gills was furious and stepped between them. They grappled and struggled, all about the room; chairs, tables, mirrors, went with a crash. Clive saved a calamity by snatching up the lamp.

Meanwhile Fanny and Clive though very interested spectators remained neutral to the contest. Clive afterwards declared that neither could fight "any more than a cow, they only scruffed each other."

Gills was tolerably heavy and began to get the Frenchman at a disadvantage, when that individual, hysterical with rage, suddenly



jerked himself free, snatched up a knife from the table, poised it and drove it—not home, for he reeled and staggered and fell in the corner in a heap.

Clive was a “cool fish,” had well won that reputation in fact. He was quietly puffing his pipe during the struggle, the lamp in his left hand, but seeing the knife business was in an instant alert; the moment the Frenchman had given the impulse to the blow that moment had he got the smashing “slog” between the eyes that had “knocked him off his pins.”

Clive hustled the Frenchman who was uttering what he declared to be the “most unintelligible gibberish,” and gesticulating wildly all the while. Gills kicked him, and Fanny with the utter flippancy of her kind threw some water over him. His discomfiture was thorough.

Fanny had long looked on the handsome Clive with most admiring eyes and altogether they spent a very pleasant evening, and sought their own respective couches at about half-past three next morning.

It was past twelve o'clock in the broad day that Clive woke up, very dry in the throat, and with what he playfully called a "Tom Cat" in his head. He turned round and looked at Gills whose bed was opposite to his. That young man, no longer a Freshman, was snoring pertinaciously. He had more to think of perhaps than Clive and had got to sleep later.

Gillie! called out Clive. No answer.

Gil-lie! No answer.

Clive leant over and took up a boot and flung it against the wall near his head. Gills snored obdurately.

Gil-lie!!

The door suddenly opened, and an elderly gentleman, rather tall and lean, without ceremony entered the room and glared furiously around. What process of reasoning he performed Clive never sought afterwards diligently to analyse, but it flashed through his mind in a moment that this unceremonious and matter-of-fact looking gentleman was no less a personage than "Gillie's Governor."

He hopped out of bed, and without stopping to greet the elderly gentleman or to attend in any measure to his toilet hopped in the scantiest of garments out of the room, and paced barefooted, penitently, on the cold wax-clothed passage at the head of the stairs.

This was not dignified to be sure, but a sort of fine instinct moved him that father and son would possibly prefer to be alone. Therefore Clive stalked up and down, absurd, uncomfortable, modest, but statuesque.

The old gentleman had watched him out, and as Clive paced bare-legged there, the idea seemed to strike him, and he usually prided himself upon his style, that he had not particularly recommended himself to the old gentleman.

The latter now turned his gaze, momentarily fuller of indignation, on his hopeful son.

How beautiful . . . is sleep, we are assured in one of the finest poems that we have, but the old gentleman seemed as little sentimental as humorous.

What, but thee, sleep? Soft closer of our eyes!  
Low murmurer of tender lullabies!  
Light hoverer around our happy pillows!  
Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care.  
Nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep.

All these thoughts might have coursed through the old gentleman's brain, but they did not. Gillie snored on with diligence. The old gentleman carried a light malacca cane in his hand as walking stick, and with this he poked his slumbering heir.

Hang it, old fellow, grumbled out the latter half asleep, leave a poor devil alone. We didn't get to bed till four.

This was interesting; another poke.

Oh, hang it, old man, have sense. Don't be such an ox, growled the descendant of the Gills as he rolled himself uneasily and tried to find a better posture. He rubbed his eyes.

That was a —— good lark we had with the Frenchman at Fanny's; and he seemed hugely tickled at the recollection. Ah! Fanny, Fanny, you're an angel — and he opened his eyes and beheld—O my prophetic soul!

Swearing has been defined by Coleridge, we believe, as the result of inflated lungs and a congested fancy. The old gentleman was a stage beyond that. He felt an uncontrollable impulse to do something, and a favourable portion of his son and heir's plump carcase being then quite visible he brought down that light malacca cane of his, with, for an elderly gentleman, most tremendous force.

Gills could not credit his very eyes at first at seeing his dear papa ; he doubted no longer now. Other nerves were now at work. Heaven, what a storm of the nerves. Yes, yes, it was, it was he !

He was awake. Nay, his senses were strung up to concert pitch.

He felt active, so did the old gentleman. He bounded out of bed. The night being warm and he a fat youth, he was wearing only the thinnest and shortest of vestments.

The old gentleman pursued his son about the room, and made most vigorous use of the light malacca cane upon his hide. It is a fault of parents. They can never be made

to understand when their children are grown up and need more conciliatory approach.

Gillie hopped, and ran, and jumped, and howled, and bellowed like a great calf.

Clive afterwards used to relate the whole thing with much humour. We opine that he must surely have added colour, for in his case it was true that there is something in the distresses of our best friends, that is not wholly displeasing.

Clive's own plight was bad enough; and he used to picture to propitiate Gillie and to give zest to his narrative, what would have been the case if his own "governor" had suddenly landed on him £40 in debt and in bed at half-past twelve; and then detailed how Gillie skipped in his "cutty sark" over beds, over tables, over washing-stands, while the basins were pouring out their contents, and the chest of drawers tumbling, while he raced along the floor, pursued by "the irate pa," making the absurdest endeavours to protect his rotund form and bellowing with might and main—while the tears were streaming down his face—I won't

do it again, I won't do it again, I won't do it again, the old gentleman too much occupied with his own business to vouchsafe him a word.

Clive declared finally that Gillie in a brilliant thought, such as come to men in times of direst need, had dived into the blankets, rolled himself up dexterously like a silkworm, and tumbled on the floor, and then rolled under the bed.

The result was that when the old gentleman did catch breath to speak it was to bid "His Own" pack up his things at once and be ready to go home with him by the next train; and in a great state of excitement, he banged the door and left the house.

Clive now returned to complete his toilet, and Gillie seemed to think he lacked sympathy.

### CHAPTER III.

MEANWHILE the old gentleman had gone to Joseph.

To be sure he did not blame him, as Gills was now out of his control, but he wanted to talk the matter over.

Joseph palliated the business very much.

And who is this Fanny he talked about? asked the old man nearly choking.

Fanny! Joseph knitted his brows most seriously. Oh, of course, that's the name they give to one of the fellows—Fantom, a fifth year man.

The old gentleman sank into a chair, wiped his brow, and pressed Joseph's hand fervently. His worst fears were removed.

Joseph further proceeded to talk in a reasonable way, as he expressed it, said that



it was now so close to the examination that doubtless he would work hard for the rest of the time, see his foolishness, etc., etc., that it would be too great a pity for him to lose a year over an outbreak of youthful folly.

H'm, well at any rate, I can't look at him again, just yet. I've given him something that he'll carry about with him till his last day, I hope. I'm going up by the next train. If you would be kind enough to talk with him—ah thank you! Don't spare him a bit, talk to him just like I would myself. I'd rather cut off his course at the last year than see him falling into these abominable practices. H'm, h'm. H'm, h'm. And, by-the-bye, who is that great bare-legged fellow that lives with him? What! the son of Archdeacon Clive! the venerable Archdeacon of St. Mary's?—H'mm! h'mmm. H'm, h'm.

Joseph had quite another reason for knitting his brows at the mention of the name, Fanny, than abhorrence of immoral conduct. That, he could have freely granted Gills as a privilege incontestable; he granted

it freely enough to himself, and had no small reputation thereby. Joseph was known to hold up, in good set terms, profligacy as an essential condition of manhood—but Fanny ! He read the paragraph in the *Cyclops* again as soon as the old gentleman had left.

### A CARNIVAL OF CRIME.

*Shocking case of suicide and attempted murder !*

A terrible tragedy occurred last night at a little after 3 o'clock in a two-story edifice, Eleanor House, in Museum Street, kept by a Mrs. Wilson.

It appears from what we could gather at so late an hour that a young Frenchman, Alphonse Lacour, by name, had been for some time past in the habit of frequenting the house, and had become infatuated with one of the inmates, a young girl, named Fanny Nightingale. He had it appears made arrangements with the girl, in question, to escort her to the theatre, but on his arrival at the house found himself forestalled by two young men, who are said to be students of the University, but whose names we were not

able to ascertain. Some words are said to have passed between them, the result being that Lacour was ejected from the room and submitted to various indignities. It would appear that he must have lurked somewhere in the building until the departure of his rivals, for shortly after 3 o'clock Mrs. Wilson was awakened by loud screams and cries of "murder!" "help!" every instant becoming shriller.

She rushed to the chamber occupied by the woman Nightingale from whence the sounds proceeded, and found her in her night garments and struggling with the Frenchman with the tenacity of despair. He had already inflicted some terrible wounds, gashes upon her throat and breast, besides numerous smaller cuts on the arms, legs and abdomen. Mrs. Wilson endeavoured to protect the unfortunate girl and in so doing received several but apparently not very serious injuries in the face and arms.

Meanwhile the other inmates of the house had become alarmed, and Lacour suddenly wrenching himself from the two women,

applied the knife to his own throat, almost severing the head from the trunk. The suicide was a most determined one. He died in the house shortly after and only the faintest hopes are entertained for the recovery of the girl, who has since been removed to the Central Hospital. Mrs. Wilson is happily not dangerously though painfully wounded and must be complimented on her plucky effort to protect the girl's life from the fury of the would-be murderer.

This was grave. That newspaper paragraph would have been the old gentleman's death blow.

But he never knew. He had been too much occupied to read the paper that day, nor had such tragedies any particular interest for him.

Joseph, Langden, and Romanoff exerted themselves to keep the names of Gills and Clive out of the newspapers; the culprit was dead; the police summoned to the inquest essential witnesses only.

It was, however, some time after when it

was safe to talk about it, the last stone to the column of Gillie's greatness. He was fit to rank with Romanoff.

At his examination this year the drab-haired libertine failed dismally enough. This he always considered the most unaccountable of events, for there was Clive, his bosom friend, who did no more work and got through. Such are the vagaries of Fate!

He returned home, but things were not as they had been. His father had lost all confidence in him, and the hopeful son felt his imagination less expansive when the old gentleman was near. He did not like his sisters' company with their "talk of girl's stuff," and they sometimes spoke in whispers to each other as they looked at him, and wept together, as girls will, when they talked of other days and contrasted them with now. He could no longer feed the cow with cabbages and stand looking at that peaceful creature eat with his arm about his sister's waist. Their innocence, and simple ways, and homely pleasures, were foreign to him now.

Repentance he had promised to Joseph even with the tears running down his flabby cheeks ; a letter which Clive had written for him to his father he copied, in which he endeavoured to propitiate him and assured the distressed old man by many things that were no longer sacred to his mind of his earnest desire to lead “for ever after this hour a nobler and a better life.”

# THE MAZE OF LIFE.

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## CHAPTER IV.

MEANWHILE Austin had been making in secret desperate attempts to recover for himself his own lost character.—It is not difficult to avoid the faults of others. Card playing, drinking, and such little vices of the kind that are popular one can fall into, or fall out of, easily enough. Or at any rate so it seemed to him, for the steps towards vice are not so much those of active purpose as of the lapses of a merely weak mind, and he had as yet but a small glimpse of that elaborate cult of vice where the imbeciles build golden styes, and Folly—a sort of Moloch masked as Comus—is set up as the

one deity to be worshipped. But in the excursions of his own life he had sought something more akin to his spirit. There was an intellectual side in this he had persuaded himself; for he said, what then is man, what is the strength of his faculties, and to what destinies do these powers lead them? And in measuring others he seemed to be measuring himself, and in watching the half-conscious struggles of passion, and judgment, and control, he seemed to find there reflected always a portion of himself, and in the limitations and the circumscribed fate of others he had a vague feeling of a prison house closing in about himself. And so the idea of his life was becoming urged higher, even though less distinct. It was the want of some outlet whereby he could gain some clearer view of life, for his life now seemed enveloped in a sort of mist. Can the steps of man beat upon the path that leads to Hell? Can man ascend towards Heaven? And is there any meaning of completeness, any outcome of a greater life, in that ascent towards what men think of as Heaven? . . . Beneath



the aspects of a familiar scene was a well, fathomless.

But it was hard to keep this narrow ridge of thought. For the will itself surges out of unconscious depths, and it is only by bubblings here and there that we know even ourselves.

The love of Beauty was a passion in his mind and seemed to be a portion of what he surmised that others meant by Religion. And what they called Faith he could only interpret as an inextinguishable ardour in the search of truth. He was a Pagan.

Religion—the restraint is in this authority—had been the guidance given him. And in rejecting that authority, was he not free to reject all that seemed therefrom to issue? And was he not free to follow his path? He would search out for himself the hard base of things, for there is an authority that guides the stars of heaven, and there is an authority as resistless that weighs each human act.

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Be that as it may, he was changing, not unperturbed, but struggling. In hours of loneliness his brow was bent in thought. He had no guide, no faith. Nothing but his never yet occluded finer instincts, mysterious leadings that came into his search, the baffled strivings up to higher things.

Vice, the caustic contact, its vile associations, its precipitance to Hell—he shuddered and shrank from that touch.

Thought, intellectual effort, the hope of nobler toils, were moving him, the impatience of ineptitude, the garish farce he looked upon.

Great character, great worth—he bowed his head in reverence.

All was at variance around. He was secluded.

Lacy and he were congenial more than ever, and if they had been together in flippant matters and found much mutual encouragement therein—for there are very many pretty ways of recommending the cups of sensual pleasure—now that Austin grew more grave Lacy burned with holy zeal.

He had been spending the day at the house of a friend, marched into Austin's room, and began straightway reading from a book.

Austin had been preparing for bed and was reclining in a meditative mood.

Passage after passage Lacy read while his eyes glowed and his full round voice had all the verve of eloquence ; passage after passage had struck upon the neophyte, and swayed, and took him captive.

A second man I honour and still more highly, him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable ; not daily bread but the Bread of Life.

Is not he too in his duty, endeavouring towards inward Harmony, revealing this, by act or words through all his outward endeavours, be they high or low ? Highest of all when his outward and his inward endeavours are one. When we can name him Artist, not earthly made Craftsman only but inspired Thinker, who with heaven-made implements conquers Heaven for us.

If the poor and humble toil that we may have food must not the high and glorious toil for him in return that we may have Light, have Guidance, Freedom, Immortality ?

These two in all their degrees I honour ; all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blew whither so it listeth.

Who says that ? cried Austin springing to his feet.

Lacy was standing there with his face glowing, and his breath panting.

Great, cried Austin. Exalted, bold, true ! These teachings are meant to be taken to our hearts and to be made our own. They are more than words. A mighty heart beats behind that. There is pathos there—the pathos of a strong man—the melting of a heart of adamant. But above all, Truth. The words are fearless as Apostles. The very hour has seemed to me great.

Yes, said Lacy, I had not read much of Carlyle before. I picked up this Sartor Resartus casually to-day, read, read on, every fresh passage was like a revelation. I nearly finished it and hurried home to let you see it.

Works such as these take us out of the level of our lives. They are like a refuge. But it is by act that we must make the words real. These must strike home even to this daily life of ours.

Well, go to bed now Austin, old fellow, it's late.

I could talk to you all night, this has thrown all sleeplessness away.

So could I. Come into my room. Joseph'll be in soon and interrupt us here.

Austin smiled quaintly. We must go to bed. It's late. What did we say about good habits ; and after all it's our habits and the daily service of life—our daily bread that makes us.

He undressed and got into bed, and Lacy sat on the bedside looking into his face.

Why, Austin, in that white nightgown you look like a chorister girl, a "twilight saint." That's from Keats, and Keats makes me think of the "Divine Kate." How many different styles of beauty there are and each seems to me at the time to have its own peculiar charm. The Divine Kate, Austin, voluptuous figure, red, full, pouting lips—to whisper soft words into her ear—to feel your hearts beating together. Tired? Well good night, old fellow, I hear Joseph coming up the stairs.

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This Sartor Resartus now seriously occupied his thoughts, and was continually breaking in, though with an influence grateful, inspiring, upon the general tenor of his mind.

So meditating devoutly and bracing his heart to brave attempts was he one evening walking home in company with Lacy.

Hallo, Austin! Old fellow. You're just the chap I want. And somewhat to Lacy's astonishment the utterer of this cordial greeting had taken him familiarly by the arm.

He was a young fellow of about two-and-twenty years of age, dressed not exactly as an artisan for there was a flashiness and loudness somewhat unlike that honourable class. On the whole he was a coarse looking fellow, certainly with no outward attractions and apparently with no particular inward spiritual gifts. Yet Austin was looking deeply interested. Lacy walked homeward alone.

I had a pitch with a cousin of yours last night, Austin, old boy.

A cousin of mine ! What are you talking about. I have no cousin.

Well, Mary, Mrs. Neville's sister, then.

What !

Now, Austin, what are y' givin' us ! I'm fly y' know. No kid ! do y' mean to say you never knew that.

Never knew what ? What on earth do you mean ?

Do you mean to tell me you never knew Mrs. Neville had a sister. She knows you at any rate.

Austin looked at him in absolute astonishment.

Well she has a sister then, and she lives in Verona Lane. A nice old cup of tea, that is.

Verona Lane. Good God, are you mad ? Verona Lane is one of the lowest places in town.

I know what I'm saying.

Mrs. Neville is not your cousin, but she is your second cousin, anyway. I know all about it, and she has a sister Mary, and she lives in Verona Lane. I got magging to her

last night and she let it all out. Blowed if ever I'd a' guessed she was Mrs. Neville's sister and your cousin. She never knew I knew you. You never knew it, eh? That's rum. Well look here I'll show her to you. We can go up to-morrow to see her, if you like.

Austin looked at him steadily.

Well I want to see what is at the bottom of all this. We'll go together and hear what she has to say. No. Let me see I couldn't go there. No. Here. You go and see her during the day. I suppose you can manage it when your day's work is over?

Oh, I'm off work for a spell just now.

Oh! are you? Well then, see her and make an appointment to meet me at the corner of the Albany Gardens at eight o'clock. Be certain to come if she cannot. What's your address?

Oh, it's all right; we'll be there.

Ah, but stop. What a fool I am. You called her Mary. That's Mrs. Neville's name!

The fellow laughed. You were smarter at



school, Austin. I thought you'd a' said that right off. She'll explain that all right if you come. So long.

An old schoolfellow at Tarylvale, explained Austin to Lacy, though I can't say I'm particularly proud of him. He is the son of one of the best fellows in the world, to wit, Old Ben Church; and when I was a youngster we used to go out to Lake Purrumba on fishing trips. In Tarylvale I know every man, woman, and child, and I've tramped about more with Alec Church than ever I have with you. He was the best runner and swimmer in the school, could knock a penny flying with his gun, and could find birds' nests better than anyone I ever heard of. These idyllic pastimes did not make him a Virgillian swain, although he played like a genius on the concertina. He left his home and has gone on from bad to worse, living here in this Hell!

## CHAPTER V.

ALEC was in rare spirits when he met Austin again.

Ah. There's where she promised to meet us over there by the lamp post. Ah! and there she is right as a trivet—A figure muffled in a shawl approached.

Alec on the strength of this pretty discovery had become engagingly familiar, and Austin, in the strange admixture of his feelings, could not help observing with a half humorous appreciation the satisfaction this little ceremony afforded him.

Austin stepped a little in front and the girl turned away her head and half hid her face.

Hallo, Mary, old girl, so you've come, have you? Well that's right. Here's your cousin,

Austin. Allow me to introduce you ; this is Mary, said he explanatorily.

Yes, and a bright Mary I am, said the girl with a husky sort of laugh.

And you never knew before you had a cousin, eh Austin ? Well that's rum too. I'm a friend of the family, you see."

The girl still hung her head.

Leave me now Alec, I want to speak to Mary alone.

Right you are then. Say Mary, my beauty, I'll see you to-morrow, Ta-ta. And lilting out, ta ra ra ra ra ra ra ta ra tra ra tra ra tra ra ra and ra ra ra, from the Fille de Madame Angot, he walked off and soon disappeared.

Austin took hold of Mary's hands. They gave no response either of shrinking or trust. She lifted her head, though, slowly and looked at him.

Yes, Mary, I'm your cousin. Have confidence in me, but—with an uneasy gesture—let us walk away and get out of this place. Now, Mary you must tell me everything about yourself. I never knew of your exist-

ence before yesterday, when I met him. I wished to get away, but he wouldn't let me, and then he told me about you, and I have come to you. That is all I know about it.

She remained silent.

Did you ever know me before? he asked.

O yes, of course, though I never would have recognized you.

When did you ever see me before?

Once when I was living with Uncle. My mother was married to his brother and Mrs. Neville and I were sisters, and then my father—I never knew him, and Uncle never liked to say a word, but I heard from others that he was a fly-away sort of man, and left my mother when we were both very young; and then Uncle took me to live with him because mother could not afford to keep us both, and then when she got married again I suppose she never said anything about me.

And you are both called Mary.

Yes. That was our aunt's name, and she was called Mary Graham and I was called Mary Campbell, for names, and Uncle always used to call me Mary and so it came about. And

I never knew a word about her marriage and I found out years after that the paper said "The *only* daughter of the late James Grant." I kept the paper. I have a good mind to go to her and show myself. I'll do it yet too.

No. Do not talk like that, Mary. I'm sure your sister does not know of your existence either. If they had said the eldest daughter, then she would have inquired—and they thought it best not to say anything about it.

But, said Mary brooding, to be neglected, cast out, despised by all the world is bad enough, but for my very mother to deny me! Oh, I feel as if I could go this very night to her and show myself and make her recognize her sister—and shame her.

Mary, said Austin in a low voice taking her hand—and looking into her face, when I came to see you to-night it was not to blame you, it was not to shame you, to cast reproaches at you. I came to do the best for you, whom I have never seen before, to try and still save you from this, Mary; and

will you now talk of going up to make your sister wretched? No, no, Mary. Think no more of that for my sake, if I ask you.

Mary's countenance had shown the change.

O Heaven, forgive me! how you must despise and hate me. Oh leave me, do not lower yourself by touching me. Oh! Leave me to sink back again out of your sight, out of your remembrance for ever. I wish you had never seen me, had never known of me. Leave me and I'll hide myself for ever from any who have ever known me.

Austin looked at her fearful agitation, but crushed down all but steadfast feelings in himself.

You cannot cling to this life of yours, Mary.

Hah! and Mary turned her head with a short hysterical laugh, cling to it! It's almost worse than death. That is awful.

Tell me then, Mary, your whole story. Conceal nothing. Think of no excusings. Let the truth be known, Mary, and we will never look back again. You said that you once saw me. When was that?

A long time ago when you were quite a little boy. I was living with Uncle and used often to hear about you and the others. He sometimes used to tell me things about you till I thought I could almost picture you. One day I happened to have gone to Mrs. Graham's and as I was coming back through the garden, I noticed you just leaving the house and ran up to get a nearer look at you. You walked on a few paces and then suddenly turned round and saw them looking after you. You lifted your hat and shook your head in a laughing sort of way and then ran off. When I got inside they told me it was you. I felt disappointed I hadn't got a better look at you, but I always remembered you standing like that lifting your hat and smiling, and I always used to say you were the one I knew.

Strange I never heard of you.

Well, perhaps they thought it was better. Well, I lived with Uncle for a long time, but it was very lonely. There was only him and Auntie in the house and I used to beg to go to school, or anything, but at any rate they

never sent me, and I had very little to do all day. At night we used to sit round the fire talking and reading, and Uncle used to tell us all sorts of stories at times. He had all sorts of curious books, Family Heralds, Novels, Histories and such like, and I read them all, some of them a dozen times.

He had one funny old book that I suppose nobody ever heard of but him, Tristram Shandy, they call it. Did you ever hear of it?

Yes, a famous book.

Is it? He used to like to read it, and sometimes read it out to us; and he had all Sir Walter Scott's novels and a book called Roderick Random, and all sorts of others. We seemed content to let things pass in that way. It seems like a dream now.

Then Auntie died. I never saw a man so heart-broken as Uncle was. I didn't see him cry, and he never afterwards talked to me about her, or spoke her name, but I would sometimes hear him speaking a word or two that I could not make out to himself, and he seemed to miss her at every turn and used to



wander about in such a way as if his life was altogether lonely. Then it got lonelier for me though it never seemed to strike him, and I used to go to Mrs. Graham's often because I wanted to learn dressmaking and to spend the time, and to sew there and to chat, and I got to know other people, and then I fell in with Bob.

Here she paused so long that Austin spoke.  
Who was he ?

Oh, she continued after a time, he promised to marry me. Mrs. Graham knew him and he was a pretty hard working fellow but careless and often drank though I did not know it at the time. I knew scarcely any people and used to believe what he told me. I didn't tell Uncle at first about the people that I used to meet sometimes, one way and another, at Mrs. Graham's, and he used to see me home and leave me when I got near the house.

And then afterwards I thought it better to say nothing about him, and so I used often to meet him in a secret sort of way.

I believed everything he told me. Well,

she added after a pause, when I knew the trouble that would happen, I wanted to get away. I wanted to go to service and spoke about it to Uncle. At first he would not hear of it, kept putting it off, and after a time I made up my mind to go, and then he got angry and obstinate about it. He said what did I want to do that for, he had money enough for both of us, and one thing and another, and I didn't know what to say, and I was nearly mad. I used to try and find out whether I could get a place but didn't know anyone; and then I asked Bob to try, and he said he knew of a place down here where I could go, and that he would send me money and come down and marry me when he got steady work. And then I asked Uncle again and he wanted to know what the meaning of all this was that I had got into my head, and I couldn't speak for crying. He guessed then that something was wrong and asked me about it. I could have wished that the floor would open up and swallow me, and expected that he would have killed me with

his rage or driven me out of the house, but he only grew awfully sorry looking and told me not to think of going away at any rate, and—but I couldn't stand the shame of it, in his house for I knew how awful it would be to him, and said that I must go; and then he took me by the two hands and commenced talking to me, but he could not stop the tears and his voice was nearly choking. I never saw him cry before, and then he turned and I heard him crying in his room as if his heart would break.

She paused.

They had reached a little bench, and both had sat down, but Austin rose immediately. She was sobbing with her face turned away and her head bent nearly to her knees. He separated a little from her pacing up and down.

He took her hand gently without speaking and some time they walked now on in silence.

Well?

Well I went to service and did my very best, but I had never done anything of the

kind before and was awkward and useless and every night I cried myself to sleep. My mistress was Mrs. Hopkinson, the Missionary's wife. He did everything to encourage me for he saw that I was trying my best and tried to keep me on, but she saw that I was not all right and told me to go. When I left I didn't know what on earth to do. I felt that I would rather starve than go back to Uncle to disgrace him. I had a little money and went into lodgings and then afterwards into the Women's Hospital. The child was stillborn.

When I came out I had scarcely any money left. Mr. Hopkinson had come to see me and said that he would do all he could to help me, but I felt he was too good for me and—and I couldn't bear to face her again. Well I was nearly mad and my money had run out, I used to do odd jobs of washing or the like when I could get it, and often slept in the Gardens because I had no money. I could not get a place and I was two days without eating anything, nearly mad. I was sick and tired and worn out

trying to get something to do, and felt like dying. Well, I walked about scarcely knowing what to do, and not far from there where you met me I was loitering about in an uncertain way, not able to think any more, and crying—a gentleman came up to me and asked me what was the matter. So after a little I told him I had no money, no home, and no food, and could find no work. We had walked on and he suddenly stopped and said he had an appointment, and gave me twelve shillings and told me to get some things I wanted and to meet him again next night. I met him next night and he gave me more money.

Who was he?

I don't think he ever gave me his right name, but he spoke kindly to me, and helped me when I was half dead with one thing and another, and I didn't care. Well I used to try and get a place but I couldn't. Every place that was vacant used to be rushed first thing and girls with references used to get them, because I had none and didn't know the work, but I used to make a little

doing washing and so on but not enough to keep me. And sometimes when I didn't see him I was half starving again; you can never guess what it is to starve. I used to pick orange peel out of the gutter to eat. And I often used to lie down in the Gardens at night thinking I could never rise again. Well after a time he introduced me to another friend of his, he said. I was miserable and scarcely knew what I was living for. And then he told me he was going away, and he hoped I would be able to get something to do to keep me and he put a couple of pounds into my hand and went away. I never saw him again, but gradually I got lower and lower. I could not stop myself from sinking. O God, how can I tell you how far I have sunk.

Well, do not say anything more now. It is getting late now, Mary, and I must go. Here, you want boots and clothes—now meet me in the same place to-morrow night. No! stop, show me where you live—and I'll call for you at half-past seven o'clock to-morrow. Do not forget to be in readiness.

They walked on in silence and turned up a miserable and filthy street and down a narrow lane. At last they came to a dirty looking little cottage fronting on the foot-path to which Mary pointed. There. Don't come. I'll be sure to be ready to-morrow night, and, God bless you.

It was all she had to bestow, and she gave it out even as her all.

His head was turned away and she for a moment held his hand.

As he turned he met her gaze fixed on him with an imploring look, and she bent and kissed his hand. He kissed her on the forehead then turning walked rapidly away and when out of sight broke into a run as though to escape his feelings.

He ran through the Gardens, then sometimes stopped leaning his head upon the railing of the fence, and then running on again, then turning and staring at the shadow that the moon was throwing on the sundial there, then counting the number of paces he could take with one breath, then running on again, then he would stop and press his hands to

his eyes, and the whole series of her story would rise again, and then hearing someone approaching he resumed his brisk walking pace, and so on till he reached Richmond House.

Rushing upstairs without a glance at the astonished Lacy, he entered his room, locked the door, for Joseph was away, and flung himself before his bed. He wept and sobbed till his sobbing became a monotonous moaning, and the whole story would come to him with a vividness as if he were hearing it again, and he would rise and beat his forehead with the palms of his hands and try to shut out the scene, and throw his arms with clenched fist out from him as though by an effort of physical violence to fling away the memory that pressed itself upon his brain.

The next morning last night's events seemed like a dream. His mind was endowed with a serenity to which he could not reconcile himself. He was meditating what best to do for her. No feeling of aversion did he find; her sins were not intruding on his mind.



This was Verona Lane.

He looked at his watch and stood thinking for a few moments. A young girl passed him, walked a little distance up and repassed looking into his face. She was rather neatly dressed, small in figure, muddy in complexion, looked perhaps fifteen. There was a girlishness about her appearance with which her surroundings assorted gruesomely enough.

All the little rookeries in the Lane were closed, and at this particular hour, there was an air of quiet there. The girl was about to return when he stepped over to Mary's house. The door was opened by a woman of about thirty years of age. She was hard featured coarse and ugly. Her teeth seemed to have been broken by a blow, probably were, and her eye was congested and dull. She was dressed in a brown winsey dress with a red shawl thrown over her shoulders.

Looking at Austin for a moment and before he had spoken she seemed to be aware of who he was.

Oh you want to see Mary, eh? She told me you were coming. Step inside, please, a moment, and she will soon be ready.

Austin looked into a rather dirty little room with a sofa and a table, two or three chairs, but otherwise destitute of embellishment or furniture.

He hesitated. She thought it was from fear.

Oh, it's all right. Step inside and wait a little.

Austin entered, sat on a chair that was rather crazy on its legs and waited.

On the crazy table was scratched this legend—

Enthusiast	.	.	.	.	I.
Royston	.	.	.	.	II.
Pericles	.	.	.	.	III.

The woman looked at him with a curious sort of interest.

Going into the next room she returned with Mary, but a glance showed that the wretched girl was unprepared. Slovenly dressed and without her hat, she came slowly forward shrinking from his gaze.

Her features were puffed and her face dull, pale, and heavy looking.

Well, why are you not ready ?

Oh, Austin leave me. I can't go with you. Oh leave me altogether. If I take the Yarra for it what does it matter ?

Shocked and disappointed he looked at her sharply.

No. Come get ready, don't keep me waiting.

The girl at once obeyed and went into her room.

Jack and Bob came up to-day and Bob thumped her a good bit for buying the boots, and told her he'd break her neck if she didn't give them to him. And then he said he'd let her keep them if she would bring 'im beer and 'ave a bit of a spree.

And she drank ?

'Course. Bob'd 'a taken the boots quick sticks, I tell you, and smashed her head like he did once before when she got a bit of her tantrums up.

Mary now reappeared, somewhat neatly attired. Her face which she had washed

had recovered its better look, her hair was done up in a modest way, and a new and becoming bonnet was on her head. She looked a respectable comely girl and seemed to be conscious of the improvement too. She hung her head, but she had no more of the careless and callous look.

Her companion looked at her with a sort of wonder, as though things were happening that "she couldn't make out, anyhow."

Austin's slightest movement she watched as though seeking some opportunity of rendering him homage. She found none except that of very officiously opening the door and with an attempt at politeness ushering them out; and stood gazing vacantly up the street long after they were out of sight.

At length Austin asked Mary if she had any suggestion to make.

Yes. I was thinking of going to Mr. Hopkinson who was always very kind to me, and sometimes comes round doing his best for the girls in the Lane. I always used to

keep out of his sight, because I was ashamed lest he should ever see me.

Well, how does he provide for them?

At a place called the "Women's Refuge" and there they can earn their living doing one thing and another till they get a place.

That had better be your course then, Mary, and I'll come and see you then and do all I can for you afterwards.

A long silent ride in an omnibus, and then a walk down a very long narrow street followed. Under Austin's encouragement Mary talked of the good work Mr. Hopkinson used to do.

Now Austin, wait here till I come out. I won't say who brought me unless he asks me, and then I'll say a distant relation.

Austin waited patiently for about twenty minutes till Mary reappeared.

It's all right, she said, he is going to call for me and take me to the Refuge. He asked me if anyone brought me, and when he saw I didn't like to tell he did not say anything more about it.

He is sure to come, I suppose.

Yes. It will be all right now—and her face was more cheerful and her step lighter as she detailed the particulars of the interview.

They alighted from the 'bus and were nearing Verona Lane.

Now, Austin, we must say good-bye, said Mary with an earnestness in her voice different from anything he had heard from her before. You have done too much for me already. You mustn't get into trouble on my account. Who knows who'll see you and who knows the things that people will say about you. Besides no visitors are allowed there. So you must not come. I'll be all right there, but I'd turn back now if I thought you would ever be disgraced through me.

Promise, she said. I'll be all right now now I've seen Mr. Hopkinson and promise you will leave me now and forget all about me. Oh, Austin, I'll do my very best, and she sobbed bitterly, but promise first.

Mary, I feel a strange desire. I would

like to know and understand it all—must this be—What can be done to sweep it away—this wickedness, sin. This festering swamp! If God is in Heaven should it be for ever so?—Mary, bring me to Mr. Hopkinson, and tell me what can be done. Let me do work here too.

No, no, Austin. Nothing can be done, except like baling the sea with a bucket. No, no. You are not meant to know this, I would rather see you struck dead by lightning now.

The black storm clouds were gathering. Vivid flashes in the sky were lighting up the scene every now and then in lurid gleams.

Mary,—yours has been a fearful fate, but I believe you were meant—to be a good woman. I feel I could do much for you. Mary, I have rescued you. I will do more. I feel the desire of some particular sacrifice—what might have seemed so before. I will be a constant help and friend to you. I will—

Oh, God spare me! Austin, your words go through me and it seems to press on me

like a weight—to think of your coming to that den to speak to me. Say that you will leave me to work out my own way, or it'll be the Yarra for it.

No, no. That's awful. Do not speak like that—I will promise then, and may Heaven help you to work out your way.

Now, Austin, go home—she paused and her body shook and swayed and her voice came forced, broken—and—now—so good-bye—for ever.

Austin held her hand—she was weeping—looked into her eyes, and the tears gushed to his.

He kissed her. God bless you, God bless you, burst from her lips.

He turned quickly. He ran on. He looked up to the sky. A vivid and tremendous flash opened up the spectacle of heaven and of earth. It seared his eyes. It left him for some moments blinded. Ha! ha, he cried! Burn my eyes! Burn them out! He did not recognize his voice. The rain was pouring down, beating on him in thick splashes. He ran on. He wandered for hours through the



storm. Out to the sea he had wandered, and walked along the beach, where the broken waves were beating on the sands; and into the sea he marched with the waves and the salt spray buffeting, half drowning him. Struggling back he flung himself or fell thrown where the furthest waters reached, and exhausted, incapable, hopeless, lay there till the breaking of day.

## CHAPTER VI.

AUSTIN during the years had acquired a steady habit of work and with this a stronger discipline of self. Now he worked mechanically. The habit served him and the interest of his studies was his mind's best medicine. His seclusion too was little noticed now.

Gills declared more in sorrow than anger that "Austin Brandt had lost all go out of him."

After a successful examination he found himself at home, pale and ill, but that was a matter of course. It seemed as though Austin had found as Sam Chubb had put it, "how books weigh on a man's mind."

His sister knew a secret.

Austin, come here I want to speak to you. She was standing under an elm tree that had

been planted when the Brandts came there to live. There was a chair and little footstool there, for they used often to come out all to this place to talk together after tea, and watch the sun go down so wonderfully behind that range of hills, and, while it was too early to light the lamps within, sit in the pleasant evening until those changing colours in the west had given way to dusk.

And now Austin remembered her having teased him here about the Byronism and a faint smile passed over his lips.

He came willingly enough and took the little footstool and looked up laughingly into her face.

It was very serious—did not often look so grave. There was no response to his smile. He hung his head.

Austin, I have heard things of you, no matter how or where that are not beautiful. Oh, Austin, it was striking me a blow to tell me. How can I speak of it to you. I never thought to have reached that day when I would hear of your name being sullied, Austin. You were meant for better things.

I thought your honour was too bright, your pride too high, for anything so base. How could you, Austin, how could you have done this? Austin you have wronged her—she, poor fool—you have made her feel the bitter sense of shame and degradation, and now she is undone, now that duteous selfishness snatches you away, what is left to her? Austin, what have you done?

Austin had hid his face in her lap. The tears, he could not, and as the sense of shame swept over him would not have repressed. It seemed a hot hail rained down; and, to end her words, with his hands he had sought hers. She smoothed his hair, and brushed it back from his forehead. He pressed her hand tightly and she bent forward to kiss him.

No, no, no. Let me go. I seem to have made a wreck. I will sacrifice my course. I will shake the dust of that city from my feet. I will fling off this hateful load—I will begin anew. I will leave home.

No, no, Austin, that is madness. It is wicked so to talk. Austin forget this,

and do not break your mother's heart and mine.

Who knows it?

Me only—oh, it would kill her—you must do nothing—no, no Austin, Austin, we must talk of many things yet. No, do not look so fearfully, like that. You take it far too seriously — this piece of — naughtiness, Austin! . . . The colt's worth nothing that doesn't break his halter.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mrs. Shenstone he met again by accident.

Sweet the blessings of a good woman's influence. Therein lies Heaven. Her voice came freshly. Her manner genial and easy assumed a good spirit in him. Never so poor a wretch could not but have responded. And now she filled his thoughts. He was happy when he saw her, when he heard her voice, when he spoke to her, when he touched her hand, when he beheld the temperate shining of the eyes.

And so eating out his foolish heart, he felt himself at times carried to a finer atmosphere. And it happened that one afternoon,

as often, they were all together at their house, and Austin sat in the garden reading his Carlyle. Adjoining was a green grassy open space where a couple of horses, a cow, and an emu were feeding peaceably together, and, nearer, played the little children. The dainty nine year old, now however a graceful little girl of eleven, her brother, two years younger, and a little sister, Austin's sister of Faith's age, Susan, and Harold completed the little group.

Well, Austin, how is it with the Byron? said Mrs. Gray.

Austin shook his head.

Well but what are you reading? How strange in your ways you're growing. But what is the book?

Carlyle. But look at those children. Is not that a picture—to remember, some of these days. The sun setting, the stillness so soft, so presiding, and the deepening purple clouds—it's more beautiful even than the glory of the crimson—do you not think so? that mountain of gold now fading away, the river, the mountains, the rocks, the

shades in the sky, are becoming mingled and lost in the blue, delicate, haze. The Woody Yalloak range in the far distance—the very hill-tops themselves are dissolving. And they sweep round to this near and jutting headland, this old hill, that seems almost a part of our own. Or one could follow the stream, the Woody Yalloak Creek, running there at our feet, past the green meadow, right on to the foot of the hills. The horses, the cow, and the emu—the children. Harold in his knickerbockers—The youngster's sculptured like a gladiator. Good, good. There's a great future ahead for this country, he cried, laughing as the youngsters in their exuberance wrestled about. Walter is a gentleman beside the ruffian Harold. Susan is sober, say an every-day creature, and Faith is a picture: The blue dress, the dainty red cap. Easy and elastic. She's a perfect little mother already,—and Ethel.

Ah, there comes Mrs. Shenstone herself. She is always pleasant. Austin, she has had more troubles than you ever dreamt of, but she is always cheerful—and you moody and

unapproachable, you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

I am ! he cried.

Oh Mrs. Gray, you here, and Austin. I came to look for the children ; it is getting late.

There they are, said Austin and he read :

The young spirit has awakened out of Eternity and knows not what we mean by Time ; as yet Time is no fast hurrying stream, but a sportful sunlit ocean ; years to the child are ages ; ah, the secret of vicissitude, of that slower and quicker decay, and ceaseless rushing down of the Universal World fabric, from the granite mountain to the man or day moth is yet unknown ; and in a motionless Universe we taste what afterwards in the quick whirling universe is for ever denied us, the balm of Rest. Sleep on, thou fair child, for thy long rough journey is at hand !

and so he read on.

Mrs. Gray had departed when he commenced.

Good, said Mrs. Shenstone looking at Austin, as he read, with more interest than when he looked up.

But I must read you some from the Everlasting Yea ; and so he read on till he came to this—Listen—



With other eyes, too, could I now look upon my fellow man: with an infinite Love, an infinite Pity. Poor wandering wayward man! Art thou not tried, and beaten with stripes, even as I am? Ever, whether thou bear the royal mantle or the beggar's gabardine, art thou not so weary, so heavy laden; and thy Bed of Rest is but a grave. Oh my Brother, my Brother, why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes!—

Thus was I standing in the porch of that "*Sanctuary of Sorrow*;" by strange, steep ways had I too been guided thither; and ere long its sacred gates would open, and the "*Divine Depth of Sorrow*" lie disclosed to me.

I don't understand that last part so well, Austin.

He drew a deep breath. Well our best moments are not the happiest—as we say—are not those of lightness of spirit. No, nor our sweetest either!

He looked at her, and his eyes were beaming.

She was looking assiduously at the book she had taken from his hand.

Are you happy? he asked so directly that she looked up in surprise.

I? Happy? I don't know, Austin—sometimes—I—

Yes you are! You must be. You are

wrapped up in your children, and—look at Faith, how sweet a child, and here comes dear little Ethel running.

Ethel ran and sprang into her mother's arms, who held her up and pressed her to her, and kissed her again and again.

Yes, Austin, but let us go now into the house.

\* \* \* \* \*

The night was beautifully clear. Now Austin why trouble. Nay then but if I beg to come?

How are your studies progressing. You never talk of the University at all. You're not like William, he used to talk of nothing else.

Lo, I seek a guide. *What went ye out for to see?* Explain to me my impulses, my purposes, my acts. Give me light.

I think I read that in your Sartor Resartus, that you admire so much, Austin. "Do the duty that lies nearest thee."

H'm. Sartor Resartus is great. By Heaven, that book is wonderful; but I want to see. I'm filled up with fine *sentiments*. I want to trace out—to see why this becomes

my duty—I want to know what is my duty, and how. But—but—I don't want to distress you. If it were my duty to seek out better influences, I would say, let me see you again soon, will you ?

Yes, Austin. Let me see. Mrs. Gray is coming over to-morrow. Come with her—*always come with her*. Austin smiled perhaps not without a certain sense of humour.

Well, how do you like Austin ? inquired her mother of the thoughtful Faith.

Oh—I like to see him and to hear him talk—and to listen to him—but—

But—ah,—well, what is it, Faith ?

But—he's too high now to—to take any notice of little girls.

Ah, said Mrs. Shenstone unable to restrain her laughter. That's where the shoe pinches. But it's you, child. It's you that are stiff and draw back from him—I'm certain he would have liked to kiss you, Faith.

Indeed !

At the touch of innocence—the sweet, beautiful, little girl nourished in God's grace and bearing this, unknowing of it, about her

like a nimbus, his heart was moved and chastened.

Austin treated the little girl full seriously, though hardly conscious of it—something of finer clay this piece of pottery.

And so these secluded days were slipping by, and he talked with Mrs. Shenstone often.

It seems to me Austin, she said, laughing, that I am not so imaginative as you. I find that it is this daily life of ours touches me more nearly. Now I'll tell you—I was the only girl in our family, and before I was married I was, I'm afraid, much spoilt. Be that as it may, I never knew what it was to think seriously of the future. I might have been imaginative then—but on the whole I was too happy.

When my husband died, I was suddenly brought face to face with duties that I would have once thought would have crushed me. The main thing in fact was to provide for myself and the children. I had neglected my music very much having so many things to attend to, and this was now my only hope; so I first

took lessons myself—practised nearly all day long—as long as I could at any rate—yes, I did work hard—got a diploma, and then sought for pupils. Pupils came very slowly indeed and my outlook was not bright. Some people who had known us well, good people—they offered to take two of the children for a time at least.

But you would not ?

No. No. That would have killed me. We would float or sink together, I said, and afterwards things grew better.

Good, good, good.

He looked into her eyes. Just then the two children came, Ethel eating a piece of bread and jam and smiling with the blue of the jam round her dimples, the other arm round Winnie's waist. She saw Austin, broke away and came running forward and put her little sticky paw in his. He tossed her up and kissed her.

Well, said he. You have been at least rewarded.

\* \* \* \* \*

And now the days had slipped by.

## CHAPTER VII.

AUSTIN's course was nearly over ; but while burning with desire to be out in the world, there was always growing within him a deeper thirst for knowledge. Lacy occasionally consented to discuss the question of law, and gave some interesting information on the point. It appeared that the law of contracts, though possessing no particular "philosophical genealogy," was on the whole a model of common sense, and that the law of property was a sort of bewildering patchwork on a worn-out ground, but that they had reformed it indifferent well of late ; and that though a codification of the law would be a good thing to the people, the practical obstacles in the way were pretty well insuperable. Austin listened with profound

attention, and felt grievously desirous to do that good thing. But, said Lacy laughing, it is hard to reform the laws of the country on nothing-a-year. Therefore go through your engineering first. And I would also advise you to study elocution.

Yes, of course I have always been wanting to do that.

And French.

Yes, that goes almost without saying.

And shorthand.

H'm, said Austin, missing the little stroke of irony, I wonder could I—by working hard? eh? Lacy.

His acquaintances were extending too and embraced a range from prize-fighters up to mental and moral philosophers. And amongst all these one of the best was Clifford.

Clifford was a man at that time about 30 years of age, and a man who bore the stamp of fine character upon his face. Of fair height, well built, Austin had seen him first many years ago at a cricket match, where with his ruddy cheeks and active step he looked fresh and sound “as a cockroach.”

Now the ruddy cheeks had disappeared. He was pale, but not unhealthy looking, his hair already patched with grey. His eye had lost its light vivacity, but not at all its fire. His features were set and earnest. He was at a glance a man who had toiled and a man who could toil. There was a singular tone of religion in his thoughts apparently rather than in his words, and this formed a remarkable attraction to Austin in a man who was so virile and abundant too in warm sympathies as Clifford. Clifford lived in a small house as befitting his modest means. He was an engineer, and was just beginning to enter into a fair practice, and to reap the reward of his hard toil. His way of life was simple and plain, but well occupied with work that put no severe strain upon his powers, with hope in the future, a good wife (as he said) in the present, it may be easily believed that he was little disposed to envy anything either of luxury or ease.

He had not attained his present comfortable circumstances without desperate exertion. He was the son of a small farmer who



had died some years ago leaving behind him a number of "strapping" boys. Of these Clifford seems to have been the one most attracted to book-learning, and so the others made an arrangement by which he was sent to the University, spending all his holidays however at farming work. His brothers were a good deal proud of him, and would much have preferred to launch him well in his profession rather than to hear of repayment. However, they gave way when they saw their refusal would cause him pain.

Lizzie was content to wait a little longer, he said, and it's only now we are getting into ship shape at all. This house although it's small, suits us, as I have no time for seeing company and Lizzie prefers quiet.

Good, said Austin. You're a happy man.

Ye—es. Well of course I ought to be, but I'm only on the first rung of the ladder yet. But come, the day is so fresh that it's a pity to remain inside—we'll take a walk and Lizzie will have tea when we come back.

How different a fellow he was to what might have been from that stern set countenance expected. Clifford talked of the days when he was a youngster, of football, cricket, of his sporting excursions, his camping out at Weatherbit Island, and told the story that Austin had heard imperfectly before of how he had saved the life of Melby, the painter. Melby had challenged him to a long swim and had sunk exhausted and become entangled in the weeds and Clifford, himself tired out, supported him, and carried him back—a distance of over a mile. Melby painted a picture afterwards in which Clifford figured as the pious *Æneas* carrying his sire, pick-a-back, from Troy.

Of engineering too he talked like a man of capable grasp; they talked of poetry; talked of anything but Austin's want of faith.

Clifford's poets were Wordsworth and Tennyson and there was something impressive in the way he read them.

Sitting in his chair—bent forward till his shaggy hair fell over his forehead—with

almost moveless countenance, with slow articulation, in a deep measured voice he read :

I hold it truth—with him who sings—  
To one clear harp—in diverse tones—  
That men may rise !—on stepping stones !—  
Of their dead selves !—to higher things !—

But which is your favourite of Wordsworth? he asked after reciting parts of the *Excursion*.

Ah, said Austin, it is only latterly that I know anything of him at all. Tintern Abbey has a grand organ march in its rhythm. Judging it as a poem, though, pure and simple the *Ode on Immortality* would seem to me to be the finest. The music breaks its bonds there and bursts forth with a sort of impulse of victory.

Therefore in a season of fair weather,  
Though inland far we be,  
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither,—  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
See the children ! sport ! upon the shore !  
. . . And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore, Austin repeated again and again. See

the staccato in the previous line, and then, following, that grand diapason swell.

Good, said Clifford, read it through, Brandt, like a good fellow. And he listened with an attention that was energetic.

Austin drew a long deep breath when he had finished.

Yes, John Mill hit it off. Grand imagery, but bad philosophy. The philosophy in fact, said he abruptly, is most damnable nonsense.

Clifford laughed in a half-wondering way.

But come, let's have tea.

Mrs. Clifford was very nice. She looked as Clifford said she was, a good wife—domesticated, plain. There was evidently the goodness of character there that had made her, too, as her husband said—content to wait a little longer.

I'm a little late with the tea, she explained, but I couldn't help it, the baby was a little troublesome, I hope you'll excuse it this time.

Clifford took out his watch and made a calculation.

Don't trouble about it Lizzie, you were only seven minutes late.

Ah, seven minutes was it?—Yes, the baby woke up just before I put the kettle on —

Don't mention it, Lizzie, we had no difficulty in passing the time, really. We were reading Wordsworth.

Oh, then you were happy. Do you know, Mr. Brandt, he laughs at me because I do not appreciate poetry so much as he.

Now, Lizzie, I did not laugh at you. You can't say I laughed at you.

Well then—you didn't laugh at me, I didn't mean that exactly—but you said it showed a want of soul—that is, you said it was a defect—yes, defect, that was what you said, didn't you now?

No, no, Lizzie, I was only defending myself. It was you who laughed at me.

No, James, you know I didn't laugh. It all came about, Mr. Brandt, because he was going by the corner of the street there, and reciting Tennyson—at least I don't know whether it was Tennyson, or not. Well, we'll say Tennyson—was it Tennyson? she inquired in despair of settling it herself.

Yes, Tennyson.

Well, then, Tennyson. We'll say In Memoriam or something or other; was it, though?

In Memoriam.

Yes, very well, and Mrs. Bishop was looking over the fence and James didn't see her—that is, didn't notice her, at any rate. Well she's a woman that has no education—at least I don't know whether I have a right to say that about the woman, for really I scarcely know her, but then at any rate she thought it very strange that he was going by talking in such a peculiar fashion to himself, and of course she didn't know In Memoriam—well at least I don't think so, and she spoke to me about it, and then I told Mr. Clifford—just so that the neighbours would not think him mad—at least I shouldn't say that, but eccentric—or—no, but you know how neighbours talk.

Austin was a little amused at this little point of conjugal amenity. It had evidently exercised the minds of both, for they detailed the arguments once more, step by step.

This was the only question, however, she

ventured to contest with him. Austin sympathized with her endeavours, for really neighbours will say such things if you only give them the chance, and then it isn't pleasant to be talked about, at least I don't know whether I have a right to say that—but they are mostly tradesmen's wives—Mrs. Bishop at any rate—her husband is a bootmaker, that is, a foreman in a shop, and they're not used to people going by reciting *In Memoriam*.

Then after tea they had music, and Clifford played one or two things he had learnt, by constant practice, himself. He played the *Dead March* with the same impressive countenance as he had read the *In Memoriam*.

Austin listened with a sombre pleasure.

I'm surprised, Brandt, you have so little appreciation of music. We must cultivate you. You must find pleasure in it.

Pleasure that merges into pain.

H'm, said Clifford.

How funny, said Mrs. Clifford.

Mrs. Clifford played, and played well too, and then suddenly stopped.

What did you stop for, Lizzie?

I heard the baby crying. Shall I go at once, James? He can't fall out, but he may want something.

Yes, you had better see —

And so it happened that Austin became a frequent visitor to Clifford's house, till it became a habit, and a good one.

Clifford's a painfully good fellow said Austin to Lacy, laughing; for instance we were going to church together and I had no change except half-a-crown. Well, I did not intend so richly to endow the Church, and asked Clifford if he could change it.

Certainly he said and did so.

Stop I know what's coming. He put your half-crown in the plate himself.

Yes, although I know he never puts in more than a shilling at any other time.

Did you explain?

No. It would have destroyed a certain pleasure that he felt so I pretended not to see it.

Austin often went to Church with Clifford now, though it was tacitly understood that



this was a very critical point. Clifford's mind was, however, constantly running on Austin's want of faith, for he had the same feeling as one might have at seeing a trim taut vessel drifting on to the rocks. Therefore it was curious that whenever he evinced any particular pleasure in his company, or when he ran down to the gate to meet him, he would check himself, and say soberly — You have your faults, you know, very serious. However, with perhaps something of a gulp of tolerance but cordially withal he sent many invitations to Lacy. I like him very much he said, and we can talk music together. There now is a man that can understand Beethoven.

And so Lacy came often too, and joined their walks, and Mrs. Clifford was happy in her confidence of both; and her little teatable on Sunday, with her own home-baked scones, was one of the brightest in all Dudley at this time.

Lacy, said Austin, there must be something really happy about you, for you do not seem to give Mrs. Clifford any feeling of

nervousness. I believe I won her confidence by an undisguised and candid admiration of her scones, and a certain ignorance of etiquette. Clifford is a fine fellow, but I could never feel to him, Lacy, as I do to you, old man. Clifford I admire for his character—his ability is very great, and he is altogether a fine type—and where his character is weaker just so does my appreciation fail. That does not seem to weigh so much with you. You are really, seriously, Lacy, very full of faults. You occlude each shining virtue by some grievous lapse from a state of grace. But after all there is something very human about you, so I make that my pretext for liking you; and the youngster looked up to Lacy wonderingly.

Pooh, said Lacy seizing him by the arms, well you may, for if you were lost in all despair, and stained with guilt, it is to Lacy you would come first to be forgiven. But Clifford has too high an opinion of you. O fine Stoic! One Sunday we were walking together, and you were hanging on to my shoulder and laughing in great glee when

suddenly you caught sight of him and drew yourself up and began talking sedately about that life of St. Paul he lent you. It was cruel. It would have been better if you had laughed on.

But how could I, Lacy! We were talking of some ridiculous nonsense at the time—ah, yes—Dan'l Webster, the jumping frog,—and the fellow who didn't see no p'int about that frog different to any other frog? Picture that, Lacy, and Clifford laying his batteries to rout me on St. Paul.

## CHAPTER VIII.

LACY, Austin had long guessed was a poet, and now with some perturbations Lacy had handed him his scattered leaves, and stood by, smoking a cigar and watching the white wreaths ascend with much solicitude, and even not without exclamatory references. He did not seem to be aware that Austin was intent upon the poetry or why have interrupted him so flippantly?

The influence of Shelley was visible through all Lacy's poetry. He seemed to have drunk of the well of fine inspiration, not for assuagement, renewal, but like a voluptuary with the delicate spirit debauched. His poetry did not seem characteristic of himself, except in scattered passages here and there that seemed to come in by accident. Then

the thoughts arose in the mind that filled it as with an open landscape, and long brown slopes, and the big shapes, and the dark green foliage of Australian trees, and the feeling of the sweet air of heaven and the gorgeous sunset, sending nevertheless a sober colouring over all. For the rest there was too much of the Shelley of *Alastor*, *Revolt of Islam*, or even *Epipsychidion*; too much of the "lone Chorasman shore" and floating limbs, and nebulous, uncertain imagery, and the phases of mere weakness strung into rapturous verse. Shelley's wild imagination has often lost the touch of all reality, it dazzles; the splendour of his language whirls our mind along, and then the vision fades. Lacy was able to give a wonderful reflex of all that, and it seemed to flow spontaneously enough. Yet the hardy edge of feeling was lacking. Lacy had not broken his heart yet, nor another's.

But it was in reading Keats that Austin seemed to have first met with a glimpse of heaven, or at least a new testament. Of all the others he had read, and known his pulses

beat with theirs, he had felt obscurely that there was something yet within, and now in Keats he seemed to have first found the object of a half-conscious search.

Now I understand what Haydon meant, he said to Lacy—Keats is a spirit from another sphere, whose wanderings have struck the orbit of this earth—or how does it go, I forget, but the meaning is that. St. Agnes Eve is all beautiful. The whole conception seems to be—architectural, the chapel, the baronial halls, the maiden's chamber. Chasteness of conception, an atmosphere, rare crystalline, that is the sustaining spirit.

Ah, bitter chill it was !

The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold ;  
The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,  
And *silent* was the flock in woolly fold.

. . . . .  
Numb were the beadsman's fingers.

. . . . .  
. . . While his frosted breath,  
Like pious incense from a censer old  
Seemed taking flight for Heaven, without a death.

. . . . .  
Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,  
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon ;  
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,

And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint :  
 She seemed a splendid angel, newly drest,  
 Save wings, for heaven :—Porphyro grew faint :  
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

And Lamia, too, improves with every reading.

Charioting foremost in the envious race,  
 Like a young Jove with calm uneager face.

Good, good, good, cried Austin, absorbed in  
 the book.

Read Hyperion.

To envisage circumstance all calm,  
 To bear all naked truths,  
 That is the top of sovereignty.

Be thou therefore in the van of circumstance—

'Tis the eternal law  
 That first in beauty should be first in might.

And only blind from sheer supremacy,  
 One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,  
 Through which I wandered to eternal truth.

These words have the touch of a higher  
 intelligence.

Read said Lacy, "On the Nile."

Son of the old Moon Mountains African,  
 Nurse of swart Nations,  
 Since the world began —

Austin read it again and again.

“Son of the old Moon Mountains African” he rolled out—hurrah! see how it comes sweeping down, “Nurse of swart nations”—the children of the sun, you can see their tawny hides, and he laughed as he looked at Lacy’s face, and knead the rounded muscles of their arms, “We call thee fruitful and that very while a desert fills our seeing’s inmost span.” He read the passage again and in every intonation.

We call thee fruitful. And that very while, a desert !  
fills our *seeing’s inmost span*.

Good. Where others have wrought out pictures, he touches our eyes, we see, and a landscape with its infinite forms is there.

You infect me, Austin, cried Lacy, puffing away tremendously at a cigar, and walking round the room. Take “Autumn” now. It is a masterpiece, and partly because it is easy and natural, and playfully but half sincere.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom friend of the maturing sun ;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run ;



To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,  
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
 With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,  
 And still more, later flower for the bees,  
 Until they think warm days will never cease,  
 For Summer has o'erbrimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?  
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind.

Hurrah, cried Lacy, taking the book from  
 Austin.

Close bosom friend of the maturing sun.

We see thee sitting careless on a granary floor.

There it is, the easy bounty of an affluent  
 mind ; that gives the charm. It is a most  
 comfortable poem. There is a genius in his  
 most trivial touches.

Perhaps kiss,—*in sooth such things have been.*

Aye, ages long ago these lovers fled into the storm.  
 And by Jupiter, Keats knew what a woman  
 was.

Light feet, dark violet eyes, and parted hair ;  
 Soft dimpled hands, white neck, and creamy breast,  
 Are things on which the dazzled senses rest  
 Till the fond, fixed eyes forget they stare.

From such fine pictures, heavens ! I cannot dare  
To turn my admiration, though unpossessed  
They be of what is worthy—though not dressed  
In lovely modesty, and virtues rare.

Yet these I leave as thoughtless as a lark ;  
These lines I straight forget—e'en ere I dine,  
Or thrice my palate moisten : but when I mark  
Such charms with mild intelligences shine,  
My ear is open like a greedy shark,  
To catch the tunings of a voice divine.

. . . . .

Austin's life had fallen into a groove. Plenty of hardy exercise for the mind brought with it a widening range. The walks with Clifford on Sundays, the happy tea table, Lacy's ever present friendship, their evening walks—all that was very healthy.

His inner life, that that must yet develop into his outer life, that that must assert him, he still sought deep in the seclusion of his mind to find, to trace out, to illuminate. Worship—that which might sustain the soul, a faith, a guide,—yes, he must toil through to that, but life itself was young to the neophyte. The reading of Keats was never inseparable from a tone of sadness,

but it was a sadness that brought with it strength and restoration.

I admire Keats as much perhaps as you do, Lacy used to say, but it is for pure poetic gifts, his spontaneity, exuberance, and that Keatsian graphic power. You seem to find in him a sort of spirituality, a religion.

Yes, that seems to me to be the flame of all the inspiration. Take away St. Agnes Eve, Isabella, Lamia, Chapman's Homer, all the rest—even, yes, I believe Hyperion itself, it would scarcely seem to impair Keats to me. It is Endymion—that least artistic of them all—that is the Keatsian poem. I asked Lyndsay his opinion once. He admired him, and then showed me parts such as these

Kisses—slippery blisses.

. . . . .  
Endymion—this is cruel!

and asked me if I called this poetry! And he proceeded to point out a hundred weaknesses that I had not before observed. Keats has hit the mark beautifully. The imagination of a boy is healthy, the imagina-

tion of a man is healthy, but there is a stage between. The imagination of a boy is healthy because it is of imagination all compact, and the imagination of a man is realistic—the unhappy stage between, that was Keats. But he speaks of the “year’s castigation” he would have given the poem if he could. He would have struck through it with a vigorous pencil, lopped off, hewn ruthlessly if you like, thrown in the salt, and left it fresh and sound. Poem—irregular, inartistic—full of weak sentimentalities no doubt; rhymed—all this, but immortal.

The whole story of *Endymion* is but a growth upon the underlying poem itself. The true poem is to be found within. It is the life and soul of Keats.

Are then regalities all gilded masks?  
No, there are throned seats unscalable  
But by a patient wing, a constant spell,  
Or by ethereal things which, unconfined,  
Can make a ladder of the eternal wind,  
To poise about in cloudy thunder tents  
To watch the abysm-birth of elements.

And the whole passage of the nightingale  
“up-perched high and cloistered among

cool, and bunched leaves," that Byron laughed at.

. . . The silver flow  
Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,  
Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,  
Are things to brood on with more ardency  
Than the death day of empires.

. . . . .  
First in Beauty shall be first in might.

Beauty is no accident. Poetry is no accident. It is no mere literary faculty there—it is all that Genius means, his life is in that poem: the influences, the experiences that have shaped him, reached up to this.

His ideas seem to come sailing into his mind with a whole landscape, a world, about them. There is more than he seems to utter, there is a flood of associations, and a life behind. A peculiar phrase strikes us. It sinks into our minds. It becomes part of us. It recurs again and again with new meanings. And we find at last that it is a poem. But there is something more than that. He seems not to search for words, to aim at literary excellence, but rather to have his soul so filled with the thing that he sees and

feels, that the word too bubbles and leaps out of him with its natural force. Keats not a thinker! His whole life is led by something that is greater than thought—the search for that principle of life that reaches highest—the pillar of fire day by day.

He saw the whole Universe alive. That is pealed out unto him at every stroke. It is the impacts of that living Universe that form us, all in all. These must contain our decalogue; that must be our standard; Truth, our guide.

The highest influences are the subtlest. Complexity is the measure of type, not mass.

The movement of his life is love; the impulses first that are struck deep right through us all, these give us human fellowship, and sympathy, and rising then to that mysterious thing called Love. These develop us and draw after them all of what we call virtue, courage, energy, all that is magnanimous in man.

## CHAPTER IX.

AUSTIN's University course was over now, and he once more in Tarylvale. How long a time it had seemed to him to look forward to, how short in the retrospect. It was as vivid as if but a few weeks had slipped away since his father had driven him to the railway station, his exhortation checked at, Remember, his mother's husky voice telling him to be a good boy ; since he had first entered Richmond House, and had seen Romanoff with his sleeves tucked up showing Gills the chemistry ; since Murray had read King Lear when they assembled in Joseph's room after lunch and sung "The Golden Shore" at night. Then all waved before him like a dream ; Miss Lyddiard with the yellow hair ; his illness when Joseph and

Mac nursed him night and day; the old England and the long country walks; the University sports; the Cup race—they were phantoms, but now as he traced them out they stood before him with distinctness of all details; the vile associations he had encountered, the low aims, the unerect spirits, Murray so degraded now, poor Gillie, Romanoff and Langden—no, he would let himself think of them.

Then he thought of Mrs. Charlwood and Mrs. Neville; and then of Lacy and their long evening walks in the clear starry nights and their converse sometimes sweetest when wordless; the “Divine Kate,”—Mary,—and poor Phil P.—his sister Agnes; all these so linked and so entirely separate.

Then with thoughts that never trenched on these again, the world of his studies; Sartor Resartus; his passionate prayers; his inward self; his aims; his friendship with Clifford then; his athletics and the *το καλον*, Keats; his visits to the art gallery and his hours of contemplation of the sculpture.

And now once more in Tarylvale, his own



familiar world—his home,—and Mrs. Shenstone, and her good woman's talk, her music, and her singing. Faith, he traced up from the hour that he had seen her first; there she sat with the soft lamplight falling on her head, the patient little face bent down to her arithmetic, the bringing the book to him, his taking her hand, the dancing into the room, the picture of the children playing together in the garden and singing their roundelay, the graceful Faith with the blue dress and dainty red cap, and then their walks with Mrs. Gray and all together. How different a tone all this brought into his mind; his heart was purified from its dross—there seemed a freshness as of fresh air; the green grassy fields, and the old hill, the blue open sky of day and the starry heavens came lightly to his mind, and still without an effort there they stood so free and bold and clear, and full too, as if with visual eye he saw the landscape once again.

These pictures succeeded all unbidden but he lingered on them now. Mrs. Shenstone had two months before left Tarylvale; and

for the rest it would be by chance merely that they would meet again, if ever.

Matthew Brandt and his good spouse were not ill pleased at Austin's course. They magnified his abilities and the mother could not conceal her little vanity when the neighbours talked of him.

And so they allowed their minds to wander in all the extravagances of fancy, and Sam Chubb had been known once to have declared that he believed Austin Brandt would one day yet be a Member of Parliament, and "as good as any on 'em."

These and other ambitions equally as wild may have been treasured perhaps by Matthew Brandt and his good wife, but when they hoped most he disappointed them.

A deeper uneasiness had filled their minds—and that was that after all he had not, as they had comforted themselves by saying, come back by-and-bye, when he got a little older and had more sense, into the true Church again that was founded on a rock.

Praise be to God, said Father McSheehy, a common phrase with him, he's just a little

wild at present. It'll be all roight width him by-and-bye. Sure and y' couldn't be angry width him at all, at all; and he smiled benignantlly with his round good-natured face. He was the curator of souls in the little village—tall in stature and with shoulders very broad, he yet made no impressive figure; he seemed to be so unconscious of his strength. Good nature beamed in his soft face and he was a great favourite of all the children round about. Father McSheehy had no great love of books—Sure and I had enough of dthat in the college, he used to say, but he had extraordinary notions of Austin's acquisitions.

This was the man whom Matthew Brandt besought to get something out of his unhappy son to see how it stood with him. He won't open his lips to me, he said.

Arrah, take him aisily and softly—he'll come round in toime.

Come on, Austin, he said, I'm going a long dhroive to Barrawara to-day, and it's the prettiest dhroive in the country.

Father McSheehy's sense of religion though

reverend was by no means gloomy. No one loved a joke better than he when it really fairly struck him—for his naïveté seemed even to obscure his Irish wit.

Now Austin, take the reins a little while, and I'll say my office; and he pulled out of his pocket a little well-thumbed prayer book and began to babble away at great speed.

You get through it pretty quickly, said Austin when he closed it after about twenty minutes.

Arrah and I'm not a quarter through it—but we needn't do it all at once—We can pray a little and then we can have a little sing together; and as this part of the way was scarcely frequented at all—a pleasant avenue-like drive along a well formed road—he struck up and Austin attempted to assist him with the little idyll of the “Pitchers of Coleraine”; “Barbara Allan” and “Kate Kearney” followed.

Bravo, Bravo, cried His Reverence in high glee. Your father, he whispered this to Austin, doesn't loike me to be singing thim

songs, but praise be to God, he's too strict altogether.

Very well then, said Austin with gravity, do a little of your office now to balance it. We'll let the horse walk up this long hill.

Once more the prayers were babbled off in great style.

Why don't you learn the whole thing off by heart, said Austin, and then you could rattle away with it at any time.

Och, we couldn't do that at all—it's different in different days. Cardinal Newman there I'm told can't remember the simplest little prayers that the bhoys know all about. But he must always have his book.

How long does your office take every day?

Over an hour. It's a good man that will do it under. Father Rogers there in Gresham, though, sure he's the devil entirety width it. Arrah he bates me hollow, and a toll-loll don't-care-a-damn sort of a fellow you'd think him too, faith.

And you've got to get through it every day?

Yes. I was nearly cot once. Your father's too hospitable altogether and there was me and two others there and we sat over a glass of whisky until, bedad, I noticed it was nearly 11 o'clock.

Well ?

Well, I didn't say a word but says to myself I must be in, and out I slipped and told your mother I must be off and ran home as quickly as I could and just got through with it in toime.

Suppose you were to let it slip altogether ?

Austin ! And is it you that's after asking a question loike dthat ? Och, that would be terrible entoirely. When a man once let a thing loike dthat shlip he'd be very soon letting everything at all shlip. That would be terrible—terrible.

He was evidently impressed and Austin said no more. They struck up the " Wearing of the Green " as a diversion and sang it with great spirit through.

Whoop La ! cried out Father McSheehy, isn't that terrible. Praise be to God !

There's a madness about that song, said

Austin laughing, that seems to work into the blood. I'm not surprised when I hear it at Irishmen being such reckless devils as they are.

Arrah, when the poor divils are trodden down width iniquitous laws loike—loike—sheep and sent off to the jails. I could tell you terrible things. Terrible things entoirely that that poor country has to suffer—Praise be to God.

And so with this “infantine familiar clasp of things Divine,” mutual good humour made the long way pleasant.

To be sure Austin derived no particular spiritual guidance from these agreeable excursions; in fact he himself was the only one to broach the subject.

His want of faith preyed on his mind as incessantly as with Matthew Brandt himself—their methods of solution made the difference. Austin, therefore, ruminating on these inscrutable mysteries so abundant in revealed religion was curious to see how the hyper-excited phantasies that expanded in the brain of Origines would find their explanation in a

mind so naïve as that of the good Padre himself.

He asked him to explain the Trinity.

Arrah, and don't be throubling your moind about such things at all, at all. You'll be lost, clane gone. I've been clane gone myself thinking about thim, Praise be to God. Hold on to the true Church. Arrah clap the brake on, or we'll go to the divil entoirely.

This latter had reference to the buggy for Austin was allowing the horses to get up an alarming pace down hill—Why can't you take it steady and not bother your head and you'll be all roight.

Look at the father there. That's a man for ye. The father told me himself that he could never divine these holy and blessed mysteries of the Church. He said they were above him—above—above—clane away entoirely, Praise be to God. And he looked upward into the infinite azure as he spoke.

Austin looked up too.

That blue sky is made of dust, he said.

What's dthat, Austin, you're saying ?

I assure you, said Austin, simmering with



amusement at the good Padre's perplexity, and your blue eye is but a turbid medium.

Austin !

And the perplexity you feel was projected in the nebulous cloud that floated formless in space before the æons began.

Austin, what's dthis talk, entoirely ?

Matter of fact, I assure you. I am nothing if not practical. You'll find it set down in excellent good English. Shall I lend you the book.

Arrah, be sensible.

Faith and I am. But this makes the mystery and wonder none the less profound I apprehend, nor the architecture frailer, when we behold not architraves and columns but more impregnable—the myriad play of balanced force. That obdurate stone there is a miracle could we but rightly once behold it.

Father McSheehy looked at the obdurate stone.

Is it the goold you mane to say is in the shtone. The father says a line of reef runs through.

Austin laughed.

What was the name of that man who went forth to seek his father's asses and found— The Padre had already struck up "The Minstrel Bo-o-y—to the war—has go-o-one!" and Austin, laughing heartily again, joined in.

\* \* \* \* \*

Matthew Brandt was an earnest man and his aim was practical enough. Austin, lest the enemy should blaspheme, must give clear and unmistakable public tokens, that even if a little neglectful of the necessary duties, a highly regrettable thing nevertheless, he still acknowledged the Sovereignty of the Holy Church and the truth of its essential doctrines. Finding therefore no other means he spoke to his son himself and, accustomed to unquestioning obedience, spoke with all authority. He expected at the worst a sort of remissness perhaps in the regularity of duties; other possibilities he could not contemplate.

Austin retired to his room.

He locked the door and paced up and down and his chest began to heave with emotion. He stood in greater awe of his father's authority than of that of the Church, had more faith in his goodness, and now must drive an arrow into his heart. And yet could he now smother what he had vaunted before and save himself by lying. Hypocrisy—it had an uncongenial feel. No. Better to leave his home for ever and eat the bitter earth than that. He sat down. A feeble stroke he said would rankle him and ruin me. I'll strike home. He'll get over that.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I will come to the point at once. I am not a Catholic. I am not a Christian. The phrases—born a Catholic—brought up a Catholic—are in an intellectual regard most eminently absurd. Is faith a heritage, and do God's eternal truths depend upon a Catechism's dosings. These terms stand as the symbols of a bigotry and a tyranny that seem impious to me. The history of the

Catholic Church is appalling in its wickedness ; its forms, to all intents and purposes, a mummary, a farce ; its pretensions in so far as based in reason, ridiculous. You have told me it is the only consistent creed. It is the *reductio ad absurdum* of them all. I will not question fine points of dogma for I am encountered at the very base of these religions by a demand to abdicate all reason and the only guides I know. If faith is higher than that, I say, How do I know ? If its persuasion is irresistible then I am but the passive instrument and must await the seizure. I am conscious enough of the frailty of our reason ; this should make us rise in strength and resolution for the truth. Awe, reverence, worship of God I believe to be the highest disposition of the mind ; work, endeavour, his greatest praise. In these words breathe the true spirit of religion “ Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” However I may in conduct fall away from this may be but in the nature of man, but I can never deny or refuse it. I will stand to my guides. In saying this

I hope I am reverent. I have endeavoured to be simply true.

Your affectionate son,

AUSTIN BRANDT.

And drawing a deep breath he brought this note and placed it on his father's desk. The subject was never alluded to again, but there was an impassable gulf between them. The pain was none the less because such things have often been.

## CHAPTER X.

AUSTIN was launched. It was the beginning of an active life in which the product would be seen of his previous preparations, and he was full of all sorts of good resolves, but at the same time he was beginning to realize that his luminous vapourings were disappearing, and looking into the little hard mechanical things that make up a routine of life he often rubbed his eyes:—This is life, then . . . *Is this life?* He had entered the Civil Service, or to be more precise the Engineer in Chief's branch in Dudley of that vast Governmental system. He was free from his prescribed courses of study, but found now more than ever that to advance his own education was a very seriously-given charge. The zest that had always stirred

him for knowledge in itself was growing, and now too there was a livelier apprehension of the drift of all the intellectual currents that he met. And he was beginning to see, or to seem to see, that from the most familiar thoughts and practical outcome of our endeavours we are in our search for a wider command of life led back inevitably to the domain of science; and that seemed to him to include all.

However, if Dudley itself be something more than a figment of the brain, the Engineer in Chief's office may also be still in existence; and to Austin who was beginning to find an enormous appetite for facts, each particular desk, and instrument, and plan, and record, had its own interest, and as he went about touching them, he said, Yes, here it is, this is life . . . actual life. And he had heard a grand and rolling speech by a very distinguished visitor in which the Civil Service was eulogised as being a sort of backbone to the country, and each particular man was designated as a "Soldier in the Valiant Army of Peace."

On the third story of an imposing edifice, behold a large room, (40 ft. by 20, to be exact) facing Collins Street at one end and overlooking at the other the river, the bay, the wharves, the piers, the ant-like activity of the harbour, the forests of masts. The room is lighted by the large plain windows at these extremities. It is provided with two doors one on each side near the harbour end, affording a passage into the contiguous rooms; and with four large desks on one side of the passage and one on the other, the business-like appearance of the office is established. A glance at the desks shows there, sitting at each, on an average, three or four valiant soldiers of peace. A glance shows also order and zeal, in spite even of the continual marching to and fro through the passage.

These soldiers of peace are of very various ages and degrees of experience—MacFarland a man who had “held fine positions in his day,” a fine man too, a sturdy Scotchman, with a head like Silenus; the two Charltons, a very tall one and a very short one; Pen-



halluriack, a stubbly not to say plebeian looking gentleman, whose extraordinary stories always begin in some such fashion as—“When I was in charge of the Great Serin-gapatam Railway—”; then a number of younger men, and one little fellow of fourteen, with red hair, red face, and bright eyes, who is a sort of spoilt child of the office.

The Head of the Room was Mr. Baxter, a slightly grey russet and nervous little man, known to be much bullied by the Chief of the Department, but, in return, designated as his “right hand man.” Thirty years ago he had been the spoilt child himself, and had grown up under the eye of the Chief ever since. The Chief was a man rugged as a grizzly bear, but declared by some, perhaps on that account, to be “at bottom one of the best hearted fellows in the world.” He was known to swear terribly; and used to keep his right hand man running backwards and forwards like a schoolboy. He was very energetic and having no æsthetic tastes, his hobby was The Department.

Poor Mr. Baxter suffered in silence and in his own room wished only for a quiet life.

On most of the desks are spread huge drawings, plans of the line, sections, cross sections, banks, cuttings, etc., etc. At other desks the field books are being consulted, calculations of earthworks being made, etc., etc. The room is hung round with maps, plans, diagrams, etc., and the pigeon holes and racks are filled with books and drawings. Flowers adorn the desk of Penhalluriack, for he is a great amateur gardener, and he has also presented to Mr. Baxter a choice and magnificent bouquet.

A glance shows order and zeal, but two or three glances, if they are very shrewd, might reveal something of this sort. Penhalluriack has just gone over to Thomson with a large plan in his hand, step slow, countenance meditative. He spreads the plan, and begins, — When I was in Beloochistan at the head of the Great Rumjee Tunnel —

Smith and Welldon, side by side, are discussing in undertones the chances of Tamer-

lane, who it appears "romped home last Saturday—8st. 2,—Jimmy Tugg up—you ought to have seen —"

Most of the others are taking advantage of the opportunity to talk of nothing but football.

Jenkins and Scarlett are looking out of the window into Collins Street watching with great amusement a couple of plumbers who seem to be shirking their work.

James and Hoyne at the other extremity take quite an affectionate interest in the mail steamers. Oley has the "Cyclops" in his desk, Hewson, "Alice, or the Mysteries," under his plan, little Allsopp is "fiddling" with a toy steam engine, Austin yawning desperately over interminable rows upon rows of figures, and Mr. Baxter is working with feverous haste. W. P. Alldous, the lithographer, has stepped in from the other room with the design of a culvert, and is officially or at any rate officiously consulting with James.

Mr. Baxter rushes out to the Chief, and W. P. Alldous holds up to the admiration of

all a pen-and-ink sketch of Franzini, the *première danseuse*.

Blashford "eggs" on MacFarland to start a Highland Fling, Tommie Allsopp has put a match under his steam engine which is puffing away at a great rate, and even the notes of a zither may be heard, for Thomas takes lessons three times a week.

Stoneyhurst, one of the field engineers, comes in, ruddy, clear eyed, delighted to be back for a day or two in town. While waiting for Mr. Baxter, he is pouring off his good spirits on Austin, reminding him of "Boccaccio" and proposing "Saints and Sinners" to-night, eh? and Lacy too! then interminable talks—he is overflowing with health and good-heartedness.

MacFarland steps down and borrows 10s

Mr. Baxter returns out of breath. Order once more, but lunch time is near, nominally half-an-hour—an hour and a half at the least. Even Mr. Baxter relaxes. He discusses the budget with Oley, and hopes there will be plenty of new lines in the next bill. The conversation in the office and at lunch is in

general comfortably at ease. This is no doubt due in part to the fact that each knows the salaries, the position, the habits, the tastes, or rather the hobbies of all. Their prospects do not trouble them. The Pleasures of Hope in this respect have also been reduced to departmental form,—unless indeed a man's speculation might wander in the "free path" of a somewhat dubious £5 in his annual increment; their duties do not trouble them very much, they are also pigeon-holed and long custom has made the routine easy.

The day on which MacFarland, or Mac. as he was familiarly called, had borrowed the 10s. was close to the end of the month. At this period Mac.'s spirits always began to show signs of perturbations, and these perturbations used to become more and more evident until "pay-day." At this point they culminated and exploded. Mac.'s first care was to pay his small debts. Mac. had a daughter, a young girl whose virtues he had been known to celebrate in very high terms. To her he used to bring on the last day of

every month £12 thus leaving a small sum to himself for "necessaries." What these "necessaries" were Mac. did not precisely define.

Perhaps his daughter was able to guess, but so good a girl was she and so careful a housekeeper, that she had at odd times been able from her own savings to buy a fine coat for Mac., and at another time an umbrella, and even, on one occasion, pantaloons. It is to be feared that poor Mac. would never himself have included these things in his "necessaries." However, without imputing any undue influence to the moon, it was noticeable that the first few days of the new month were always somewhat unsteady for Mac.

The first of these days he was always in high not to say demonstrative good humour. The second day he always used to be full of pity for "poor Ward," his most particular friend, whom he declared to be a "little addicted—you know." On this day he was a purist in everything, the staunchest of Conservatives, and had been known to

take Tommie Allsopp severely to task for having made use of the expression "all right," instead of "very well!" The third day Ward was outrageous, the fellow has no sense of moral character . . . listens to no reason; in fact he despaired entirely of the redemption of Ward. Also Austin not only knew nothing of engineering, but if he lived 90 years would never learn. The fifth day it was, perhaps you don't happen to have 5s. with you, old fellow . . . till the end of the month . . . settling down . . . last few days . . . little upset . . . slight touch of influenza . . . you know . . . ah, thanks . . . do the same. . . . I've got something to tell you about some day— He rises to go . . . there's a woman in it.

Poor Mac., the spirit had never flagged, but the flesh, alas! it was that eternal flesh. He was always being tempted on the weak side. For instance, he and the two Charltons tested their weights one day; the tall one, the elder of the two Charltons, it was found, weighed eleven stone five, but the short one, "Stumpy," as he was called, weighed twelve

stone eleven ! Now this was *too* funny !—  
“ whisky all round ” upon that.

Thus it will be seen that the work of the office was not a continuous forced march. They were all too prone to human sympathy, there. Besides one must have the sense of duty impressed very vividly on one's mind to toil with zeal for that vague thing known as the Department, for, as Lord Coke assures us, Corporations have no souls.

A certain worthy of the adjoining room used to emulate Charles Lamb himself in the punctuality with which he went away early and came late. He had a military figure and square-about movements. The door would open like clock work, and Charles, as they dubbed him on account of this point of resemblance to the illustrious humourist, would appear, march to the book and *precisely at five minutes to four*,—here indeed first relaxing from a certain severity of style, —sign his name at the time of departure.

Another, a veteran of the football arena, resembled the Pharisees inasmuch as he washed oft. This assiduity as to the second



of the cardinal virtues was the more remarkable because his respect to Godliness, which ought to be the first, was certainly not altogether too impressive in tone. But by the process of simple addition of the time spent in ablution and its accessories one got some clue to the mystery of these observances.

Nevertheless it would be wrong to give an impression of laziness being the invariable disposition, even in this Government office. A number, and the more noticeably as the weight of responsibility and salary increased, worked well; nay, even toiled, some of them, nay flustered, and bustled, and became nervous over their work, and mistook fuss for energy at all times, and worried themselves to illness, now and then.

Austin himself was admonished by the man of ablutions, partly on personal, partly on philanthropic grounds; the personal grounds being that he would "never get a penny the more" for hard work, and the philanthropic grounds being that too great expedition would have as a consequence a diminution of staff—"and then what would

poor devils like Mac. and Penhalluriack do ? ”  
There was a first cardinal virtue after all.

Charles had answered the question in a negative way.

If some of these fellows were left to fight it out for themselves in the world, that man of clock-like regularity had said, they would need a strong gruelling before they were worth their salt. He acted on this principle too, for when his son, a smart lad, was offered a position in the office, he sent him to a foundry to learn mechanical engineering. The youthful scion proved his mettle by revolting, and subsequently made his name by writing the libretto of a comic opera.

Austin was delighted to find instruction in the study of the Department itself, and it was curious to observe how the Department had grown and developed not according to any well conceived original design but by adapting itself here and there as the case might be according to its own requirements. So all the work was woven together, though most of the workers were pretty ignorant of anything in the Department out-

side their own little routine. Thus, there were the field operations, a complex but orderly campaign in itself, then the representation of all this work in the office, the selections of the lines, involving so many hundred considerations outside of the questions that lay on the surface, the grading, the cuttings, the banks, the bridges, the properties, the finance, the construction, the service, the relations of the several departments one to another, the administration of all; and underlying all this the subject of engineering itself, its accessory arts, its vast industrial connections; and still deeper, supporting all, the sciences of physics, and chemistry, and the like; the abstruse results of the thinker; and again in another direction, the greater economical questions, the budgets, the loans, parliament, the battling of parties, the nation. On every side the problem spreads, the scope widening, and on every side the mind is infallibly led up to the exposition of science.

Engineering is rather an art than a science, and its whole field may be *à priori* set forth.

It is an art in which the fashioner aims at use more than beauty, (though in architecture, from the Parthenon to Brunelleschi's, and in bridges, from Palladio's to that of Brooklyn, beauty has not at all been neglected), and its tools are machines of precision. It is an art based, much more closely than can be said of the strictly æsthetic arts, upon science, and its tasks are much more precisely defined. Hence the mighty leaps of engineering within the last fifty years have been the result of the leaps of the arts and sciences on which it depends. But during the early part of this half-century the intelligence and knowledge of its routine practitioners had often failed to leap in response. Hence arose a form of dispute, now happily rarer, between so-called "practical" men and "theoretical" men. Those who had acquired by observation a great deal of valuable knowledge, and had continued for many years perpetrating the same kind of blunders and clinging to inapplicable rules because untaught in the general principles, these were the "practical"

men. The men who could not design a good wheelbarrow nor account for the shape of a rail, have squandered millions in every part of the world, and left behind them monuments scarcely less portentous than the Great Wall of China or the Colosseum of Rome. They loved to boast that they had been under Brunel or Hawkshawe or perhaps even George Stephenson himself, and would often neglect to say how many grades under these worthies they had been.

The "theoretical" men had read Rankine and Mozeley and Stoney, and perhaps also Wohler and Spannenberg. And so it happened that they were often severe on Brunel or Hawkshawe or George Stephenson and had even caught tripping Rankine himself. Yet also they often fell into the most terrible disasters. They would calculate a bridge to perfection and lose in the market, and lose by bad workmanship, and lose in a dozen ways, ten times as much as they had saved. They would build a beautiful coffer-dam, but before it was finished they would somehow or other drown a work-

man or two. Or again one might have heard of the sad history of one of them who was building a reservoir, and had discovered a suitable site with a stratum of clay, and thereupon had expended thousands and thousands of pounds before being aware that this stratum was only an inch or two thick. Stories of this kind were common. The "practical" men told one set of stories, and the "theoretical" told another, and the unhappy reflection is that both sides spoke the truth. However, for the "theoretical" man every day was a gain and every blunder a lesson, while the more shrewd were able to learn from the failures of others. For the "practical" man, or at least for the country he served, there could be no hope except in an early surcease. The Chief of the Department in Dudley was a "practical" man. His authority was simply prodigious, for he had built a viaduct at a cost of a quarter of million of pounds, and with naïve humour called it a "monster." It was certainly a defiance of natural laws and a slight deviation would have rendered its monstrosity

useless. But then the world is struck with big effects, and a man who can squander his millions can be nothing less than a giant; and the names of Clausius and Jowle are known but to a few.

Austin was suspected of having read Rankine and that was something worse than a misdemeanour at his very *début*. He was relegated, therefore, to the very base of the machine, and that with the surest of prospects of remaining there for a long time. For it was a Government office and the men were docketed into certain grooves, just as the papers were inserted into the pigeon holes, perhaps to remain in those wooden receptacles for ever. The most diligent and the laziest wight had pretty much the same fate in the end, other things being equal; and had a man ability then that like virtue must be a reward unto itself.

Austin's life very naturally became one of drudgery. Is this really life? he had questioned and feeling round his little world, and meeting nothing but the dullest responses it gradually seemed to him that it was more

like a prison of wood. It was the actual lack of money, for one thing, to follow out his own projects that he saw to be at the bottom of his trouble, and therefore he was forced to seclusion and intellectual work in his evenings, for that indeed seemed to give the sole chance of escape from his wretched procrustean den. But the Calculus, and Mill's Logic, or the Bimetallic Currency may be good wholesome food, and yet not for ever sufficient; and there was a sort of wistfulness in it when in the silence of his hermit room Austin shut his eyes and pictured Mrs. Shenstone once again and Faith, and Tarylvale; and there was a violent uprising in his mind when he thought of his fine dreams, now all vanished, and his resolves to lead a great life not shattered so much as crumbling away into dust, and the powers that he felt within him as of something superior dying for want sheerly of food; and he was as a culprit in his cell beating at the bars that kept him from the sweet fields, and fearing not death, yet unable to break through his shackles.



It has not been told, the story of Agnes St. Clair. The infatuation of her presence came to Austin now. She played and sang and when he began to look thoughtful she scolded his stern brow. She was more impulsive now than ever. She sometimes wept, and when he looked into her eyes she laughed and said that it was nothing; and she toyed with his hair and shook out her own locks and kissed him.

All the experiences for good and bad that had made their impression on Austin's mind began to fade now in their influence. He began to drift. Purposes he had built up again and trained his heart and mind to; they called to him; with helpless and despairing call. It was as though he fled from good. Nessie's kisses, the soft warmth of her presence, the sensuous delight, enwrapped him. And now the critical contest in his mind began:—It was desperately fought out.

The soft enticements stole upon his mind, he felt their seizure and their stress, his brain became the prey to cruel thoughts—this struggling, struggling, ever perturbing

struggling—the enticement of the fall—the barren victory. Pleasant was the dalliance, the kisses of her ripe red lips, the beating of her heart, the soft narcotic slumber of the sense . . . to lapse; must he fight the ever weary struggle more:—the intimations of a higher life . . . he shrank from it, cried out against it, like the coming back to life after the embalming lying in the snow; and then at length stronger and more resolute and all victorious at last came that appeal. Then with all its rudeness of reality followed close experience—Mary with her fearful history, the white face of Agnes as he had seen her first and the anguish of her soul, the inseparable grades from foolish dalliance with wanton things down to that pit of Hell whose darkness he had never dared to pierce, whose touch was pollution; that murky hell of vice with all its oafish shapes.

He started with the violence of his spirit's throes. No! No!

I press my way amid the darkness of the night,  
Amid the lightnings of the storm,  
But I have seen the dawning of the day,  
And fling from off me now the fetters of defeat.

In this, the hour of darkness and of pain,  
Amid the stress of conflict and the wavering strength,  
I hold the victory yet and will not yield.  
Though beaten I will rise,  
Though baffled I will hold my path,  
And if I stumble, I will stumble onward still.

So it was when a letter came to him in whose superscription he noticed an old familiar hand. "Clifford" he said and hastily broke the seal, and with some emotion read.

He read it again and again.

Clifford had only reproaches for himself for having in a heated moment spoken as he did.

How keenly I felt your turning away from me he wrote, I am now ashamed to say—though a flood of old associations rushes over me as I think of the days we walked together and talked in easy friendliness. Those Sundays were a boon to me, more than you will ever know. The past is with us and helps to form the present. Those days affect the *now* of my existence. Keats I never read but I think of you, and Keats is very dear to me. You come back to me in a

hundred ways—what need I say. I would not write, thus, you know, if I did not feel it deeply —

The letter went on further to explain that the position of Mathematical Master was vacant at Caius College, the famous Sleepy Hollow school. The appointment was a good one he set forth and he knew enough about Austin's future intentions to be aware that he would appreciate an opportunity to gain further time for study too, etc., etc. In a word he had mentioned Austin's name to the principal who had expressed a great desire to see him, and Clifford now invited him to his house.

You know, he finished, you will be ever welcome to all that I can offer.

How true, how good he is, cried Austin, brave as a Paladin, gentle as a woman.

## SEEKING OUTLET.

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### CHAPTER XI.

CLIFFORD'S salary was considerably higher, the town was not large, and he was now a man of some importance there.

Mrs. Clifford, however, made no pretence and her scones tasted just as well as ever.

The Principal of the School, Dr. Godfrey, won Austin's high regard at first sight. A hearty English gentleman; bluff some might have called his manner, nevertheless, refined; about fifty, of average height and sturdy figure; his cheeks were yet fresh with health, his blue eyes sparkled, and his full flowing beard set off the appearance of a fine stamp of man.

He seemed pleased, and Austin could not resist that smile of his of easy affability. At first sight too Dr. Godfrey was, though a man of intellectual character, not at all a pedant. The sturdy figure, the healthy look, the keen twinkling eye—Yes, that was a man who could reap pleasure in the open field, who could play a salmon, shoot a snipe, ride to hounds, who had been a good man in a scrimmage doubtless, and probably could still defend his wickets. This was excellent in a man who had so good a reputation for learning.

The school was a large building of two stories, of bluestone, designed in such a way as to enclose a square or quadrangle, or quad, as it was called. Built on the summit of a rising slope and surrounded on three sides by a garden, with a large playground for the rest, it had a fine appearance from without. From the lower side looked up to from beyond the garden, covered on the face with ivy too, it had an aspect almost picturesque.

Within the quadrangle with the bare

asphalte and the four bare bluestone walls, relieved only by the doors of schoolrooms and the little windows up above, the aspect was not enlivening.

On the ground floor were the schoolrooms, long rooms with bare bluestone walls arranged with forms and desks and, above, the masters' tables; then the dining-room, a long room with bare bluestone walls with three long deal tables; then the library for the elder boys, the masters' common room provided with a billiard table and a shelf of books.

Upstairs were the dormitories. A long continuous corridor ran round three sides of the quadrangle, on the one side overlooking it, and on the other were the rows of dormitory doors numbered in succession; and the quaint little windows of the dormitories overlooked the garden. At one corner of the corridors were the rooms for the masters. Austin's was small but satisfactory to a young man with a taste for the simple. He was content to look on bare walls and out into a barren prospect; these things he

did not heed, his eyes were filled with what the visual senses brought not.

The school had nearly a hundred boarders, and a good staff of masters. Austin bowed with some gravity when introduced.

He had been sedulously persuading himself of the advantages of his present course of life, of the opportunity for study and intellectual converse, and the peculiar honour of the schoolmaster—to leave upon the young receptive mind, as these gentlemen no doubt did, the forms and impress of a character attuned to high ideals. It was a privilege to be there.

The two senior men seemed to think so too, for they took no further notice of him than a nod.

It doesn't do to let a new man think he knows his way about, Kemp had remarked to Argyle.

Argyle was agreed, a little sitting on won't harm him.

Kemp was the good-looking man of the establishment, that was evident. His moustache was waxed and his hair plastered down



upon his head with much care. Although not much over thirty he was inclining to be corpulent, features regular enough but puffy, and two small eyes peered out shortsightedly.

The other man was thin with a long drooping moustache of a reddish colour and a cultivated vacant look.

He was evidently an expert at billiards and his score was beginning to attract attention.

These were not the eldest, for there was a gentleman who might have been sixty but of firm figure and some deportment, excellently preserved. He was dressed with care, with a suggestion even of smartness. His figure was well braced up, his hair artistically trained and well economized; and he twisted his moustache as he criticized the game.

Meanwhile one of the two others, both a little older than Austin, had joined into friendly talk with him. Fitzhubert had a happy boyish face and discoursed at ease.

Kemp he said was a great bully, but not a bad fellow if you gave way a bit to him.

Argyle we don't see much of now. He was engaged to a handsome and interesting young lady it appeared.

The old boy there, he whispered, is McTavish, or Taffy as we call him—not to his face you know. He's 125 years old! Well—that's at least what the boys say. I don't believe he's so old myself, but at any rate he's so old that he can't get any older. He dyes his hair and whiskers and pads himself out with stays. . . . But how do you like the chief? . . . Ah, everyone likes him, especially at first, but wait a little. He's a terror, I tell you, when he's in a temper, and he gets into one often enough lately. You'll see him tearing through the passages like mad, and when his upper lip begins to twitch so—look out for squalls, that's all. We call him Cedric.

Cedric?

Yes, haven't you read Ivanhoe?—Cedric the Saxon.

Oh!

Yes, he's the sort of man who would

knock you down and pick you up and give you a sovereign.

And so Mr. Fitzhubert was continuing obligingly to "show the new man the ropes," when the door opened and there entered as with a salty gust and a Yeo-ho-heave-ho-avast-there-ye-lubbers sort of style, a figure, short, broad, dressed in a blue, absurdly short jacket, cap, white flannel breeches, on the upper part of which sat the short blue jacket in what Mr. Fitzhubert called a "very bobbish sort of way," and tennis shoes. This was Clapperton, the classical man, M.A. of Oxford—a man of five and thirty, perhaps less, though already somewhat bald, bluff, red-faced, slow-eyed, sensual, and bland. From that moment there was but one subject, and that subject was rowing. The classical man had been out coaching the senior four. As he spoke, his voice was metallic, sonorous even at times, but with a very peculiar drawl, a sort of pasty reluctance. That same evening he talked much to Austin who desired to hear descriptions of the shining lights of Oxford. Clapper-

ton, however, though he had the reputation of being deep on Plautus, was evidently no pedant. He would talk of nothing but rowing, rowing, rowing, and rowing men, and these he confidentially assured Austin and asseverated were "really the gods (or rather The Gods) of Oxford!"

The boys Austin saw next morning. They were all standing at the tables, six rows in all, and at the ends of the tables stood the masters. The boys were all curiosity and criticism and Austin could not but smile to see the direction of the eyes the moment "the new master" entered the room.

There's something of the damn'd parson about that chap, he heard one of them whisper as he passed.

At the end of one table were about twenty young fellows, every one of whom was bigger and nearly as old as himself. These were his special charges. The scale descended to a number of youngsters of about twelve. The school was famous for its athletics, and the lads had evidently thriven, in a corporeal way at least.

All were in readiness—a Psalm was read, Dr. Godfrey solus, then the masters and the boys in chorus, taking alternate verses. Then followed the Lord's Prayer given with most vociferous energy by all, then a benediction ; a bell was touched and in an instant the boys were in their places and a hum of conversation broke out all round. The youngsters looked happy enough, ate with vigour, and at a given signal from one of the masters when all were finished, disappeared in an incredibly short time, and made the playground resound again with cries.

Austin soon fell into a regular round of duties.

As it was yet summer the boys were accustomed to bathe in the sea in the early morning. The walk or rather run thither was about a mile, the bath and the walk back occupied about three-quarters of an hour. Then followed the preparation of lessons before breakfast. There was no mystery about those appetites of theirs and one could not be slow to follow an example recommended so well.

Then came the school, then a play-time of an hour and a half and then school again. Then after four o'clock, cricket in the summer months for most, rowing on the river for others, football in the winter for nearly all. After tea a brief rest then the preparation of lessons, the younger boys supervised by one of the masters in turn, the elder ones left to their own discretion. Then another assembly in the large dining-room, biscuits given round and water to drink, a reading by the principal from the New Testament, the vociferous Pater Noster again, the younger boys packed off to bed, the elder ones following soon after.

On Saturdays nearly all the boys used to make long expeditions into the country, bird nesting in the season, fishing in the streams where fish were to be caught, or otherwise amusing themselves in the open air. These excursions were their great delight. So eager were they, in fact, that youngsters had risen even at three o'clock in the morning to be out at a bird's nest first. Under the excitement of their selected pleasures too and

the anticipations of talk of it next day, some, even boys of fifteen, were accustomed to perform extraordinary feats—walking or rowing forty miles or more in the day.

Home again about seven or eight and supper eaten, they were mostly glad enough to seek their dormitories to talk awhile and then fall into blissful sleep.

On Sunday they dressed in their best, had morning Scripture lessons, then church, a walk in the afternoon. Church again after tea and then soon to bed. One could be amused to notice too the difference produced in their conduct by their attire. On Saturdays dressed in old clothes, and with a certain sense of freedom from restraint, they were blunt, unceremonious, good-natured generally, the coarse ones rude, if so inclined. On Sundays in their best—and dressing well was made something of a point—they were polite, quiet, not to say, dignified. They walked slowly in the afternoon walks—the elder ones generally where girls might be seen and ogled, and the very small ones with arms round each

other's necks telling their little confidences or repeating last day's adventures.

At this period the great scholastic question, involving one would think the whole compass of the education of youth, was the case of the Classics *versus* Mathematics, a contest to which the "Humanities" brought no very satisfactory qualities of sweetness and light, nor the Calculus much common-sense. Yet these were the days subsequent to the work of Bain on Education, and for which the Darwins, the Spencers, and Edisons, and Carlyles, had toiled. Again,

Where is education ?

Where is the man ?

It was still the dead records of a doubtful past ; it was still the problems of a phantasmagorical chess ; the one lacking in its searching nearly all colour, the other without form, both void, and failing in nine cases out of ten to show a vestige of product for all the years of their harrowing.

Have faith in God,

This is of steady happiness the cause,



(A gentle poet has admonished us, and truly he had been taught in sorrow.)

Higher than the Differential Calculus  
Or Kant's dull dogmas and mechanics' laws !

The problem is amplified here, and a solution, containing however but the obscurest indications, propounded.

Perplexing fate and ever strange follies of men! The Oxford man had in his youth worn out his living eyes searching for a city in the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus that had never existed, and now in the strength of his mature days maundered beneath the level of the schoolboys; Austin climbing up the bleak steps of Symbolic Logic, Kant's Antinomies—what not, looked out upon the scene, longed for the plains of Lombardy, possibly Spain, orange groves, wheat fields, romances and war—longed, chiding himself, for Agnes St. Clair's red lips, the beating of her passionate heart. Classics *versus* Mathematics—Caius College had settled that matter in naïve content—she taught both, indifferently. Or at least this was the programme. The subjects she really taught

well were Rowing and Football, and, though not so well, Cricket.

The school was famous for its athletics and muscle counted there for a great deal. A sturdy wight were he but tolerably good-natured was a hero for the boys. These sturdy wights were lazy to a man, and one could almost say pertinacious in their exclusion of anything like knowledge. And their way of life is worth considering, for the greater part of them were the rising *jeunesse dorée* of the country, and no doubt would very shortly consider themselves the backbone of the nation.

About twenty of the eldest had studies, two in each study—the object being that they should encourage each other by example, and by mutual exhortation, possibly, in the toil up high Parnassus.

Their terms however were unknown to Plato or to Sophocles. “A good hard plugging stroke” — “caught a crab” — “Joe’s a regular bucketer” — “Clean away with the hands” — were sundry of the sounds that came to Austin’s ears one

night too frequently to allow him to suppose that Homer was the subject of discussion. He demanded admittance. Manton, the stroke of the school eight, had been coaching up a *protégé* of his, who a minute or two before might have been seen, coat and waistcoat off, sitting on the floor with a small stick in his hands, which in a rhythmic series of curious movements he was extending rapidly from his waist and drawing slowly back again. To the initiated, we believe, this is known under the name of "ruler practice" and the object of that particular exercise was to acquire a certain dexterity in the use of an oar, wherewith to pull along the water a fantastically shaped hollow wooden vessel known also to the initiated as a "string-test racing gig." Some of the youngsters pursued these exercises with incredible zeal; trained their bodies like Spartans, devoted every afternoon to downright hard work in their boats; denied themselves many school-boy luxuries; neglected all their lessons; went up to Dudley, there pulled their fantastic log of wood over

a certain stretch of water in a somewhat shorter time than a similarly trained number from the Dudley Public Schools, or strove thereto at least even to the fainting point; returned home in the former case in abundant spirits; were cheered vociferously by the whole school, incited and led by the Doctor in a vigorous panegyric and aided by the masters, with an extra cheer for "stroke"; obtained a holiday for the school; put everyone into the best of humours for a week; continued to neglect all their lessons; dreamt of future laurels; had their photographs hung in the library; assumed that air which greatness always brings; and excited in the younger boys the dreams too of the days when they could emulate these deeds and win undying fame in the annals of the school.

Yes, the school was athletic, and youngsters too lazy to lace up their boots in the morning could endure extraordinary fatigue to be thought worthy of a place in crew or team.

Manton was meanwhile diving vigorously

into the "Elements of Euclid," the *Pons Asinorum* in fact, and repeating the text with as much fervour and speed as in this short notice he could acquire. Austin stood behind him for a time trying to preserve his scholastic dignity while Manton kept gabbling on.

Well, Manton, said he, do you make it out?

Oh, no, sir, I can't make head or tail of the thing. I've learnt it off, but I forget the thing almost as soon again. It's frightful stuff, and I can never see the use of teaching these things in a school.

Austin made some endeavours to enlighten him.

This laziness of yours too, Manton, is a wretched sin. It's the most ungracious of all sins, I think. He exhorted the imperturbable youth with much energy,—the imperturbable youth listening with forbearance, with the utmost good nature in the world—and finally exclaimed, But you wouldn't like to go out into the world so ignorant?

I beg your pardon, replied Manton drawing

himself up in conscious dignity, I do not consider myself ignorant !

You have the advantage of me then after all, said Austin laughing, Manton joining in. . . . But, now what is your idea in life ? he inquired curiously, after some conversation. What would you like to be ?

There's no need for me to be anything—I'm provided for ; my father has a station. I want to be a gentleman.

This was laudable, and after some more confidential conversation Manton made clear that he was not unambitious either. He wished indeed to win many boat races.

Well then, said Austin endeavouring to get into the mind of the imperturbable youth, you doubtless admire Ransom of the Bay Rowing Club. He's a splendidly built fellow, pulls a clean stroke, and, I've heard you say, rows like a tiger.

Oh, he's one of the crack strokes of the country, but—he's not altogether the style of fellow we like either. I've heard him drop his aitches and he called a prefect a prefix !

Slothfulness had spread amongst the boys like a disease.

A man must either toil or steal, says Carlyle, and the words were always ringing in Austin's ears.

Who was Carlyle? asked Brixton, the captain of the school.

Carlyle?—Carlyle! He was in fact a writer of books.

Brixton straightened up that fine figure of his, and Austin could not but admire the broad shoulders and the arching chest, as Brixton looked down upon books in a fine frenzy of pride.

Brain work in Brixton's view, for so far he had philosophized, was one of the trades by which men earned a livelihood, and he was something superior to that.

The influence of boys on boys is on the whole corrupting, particularly in populous boarding schools. The most vulgar of all natures are met with at an age when the mind is most sensitive and least able to resist vile contacts.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE younger boys were bright and promising, but unhappily they very seldom kept their promise, for growing a little older they were bound to discover from their foolish parents that they too were "provided for," and so began sedulously to drift on to the condition of stupid and worthless drones. On Sundays, however, when they all looked so nice, some of the youngsters used to come up so forgivingly and so confidently and with the nice fresh manners of well conditioned lads, that it would be a hard heart that did not feel drawn to them. When music, too, was being played, for they sometimes had a concert when it was altogether too wet to go out on Saturdays, or when a pathetic ballad was being sung—and some of the little fellows



had remarkably good alto voices—the very rudest of the boys were touched. There were many of the younger boys,—the blue-eyed Garth, Locksley, a fine little fellow with an almost amusing leonine pluck, and the patient serious Winterton,—whom Austin loved with foolish tenderness.

Mr. Kemp's plan with the boys was to bully furiously. "The Major," the boys called him, this example of schoolboy humour having arisen in the course of time by way of natural development—"The Bear—Ursa—Ursa Major—Major Ursa—The Major." The boys enjoyed immensely these names of their own giving, and the masters collectively were known as the "wolves." Argyle used to assume an air of theatrical dignity and superior excellence, but the boys had observed that he lacked vim and staying power, and so revenged themselves by dubbing him the "Lady Oarsman." McTavish was very snappy, Fitzhubert "chipped in with the boys" as he called it and was very popular. Dr. Godfrey's nature must have been originally most genial. He was liked by all, or

nearly all, but when by any chance the school lost a football match he used, as Fitzhubert said, "to tear along like the Bull of Bashan through the passages," and woe betide the offending urchin then. If, as indeed but rarely happened, they lost a rowing match gloom fell upon the school almost as palpable as a pall. Did anyone then, mindful of encouragements to fortitude, such as for example in the character of Timoleon who bore adversity not less well than prosperity, did anyone then greet Dr. Godfrey with any approach to cheerfulness—Mal-e-fico! How he did "tear up." The worthy Principal used to become haggard in the face, forebode dreadful possibilities, for he was an emotional man, and discourse on the good old days when such things did not, would not, *could* not come to pass. The classical man was the only one in whose company he could find much solace on these occasions for Clapperton became even more desperately melancholy than the Doctor himself. Clapperton seemed really to live to teach schoolboys how to win boat races. He was a very bad oarsman,

himself, in spite of having graduated at Oxford, but he had the conservatism and all the dozen little nice points of the third-rate practitioner. On the night preceding a boat race he used to sit up long after the others had gone to bed, then after a period of profound meditation he would make a jump at his Virgil and open it at haphazard in order to gain some clue as to the events of the morrow. If the "lot" were favourable he would remain up another hour writing a number of jubilant verses; if unfavourable, he would wander about the dark passages in a most forlorn way half the night; and if the disaster really did come it required all the vigilance of the others to keep him straight, for then he was utterly powerless to resist the devil of drunkenness that was in him, and in default of anything else he would drink chlorodyne or spirits of wine out of the lamps. All the men had their own fashion of lightening the "burthen of the mystery." McTavish used to steam off to Dudley whenever he had an opportunity. Argyle was devoted to his fiancée and devoted

to billiards. Fitzhubert was a happy fellow, and moreover being an exquisite dancer and possessing a moderate light baritone—"comic or sentimental"—he was as he deserved to be the Bayard, the pet, of the ladies. Kemp used to come home occasionally about two o'clock in the morning and tumble upstairs, perhaps going into the rooms of the others and waking them up to assure them he had had a first-rate time. For Dr. Godfrey the school was his work and his pride. He was really a fine fellow, and if he was very gloomy over a football match, well the good old days were always rosy to be sure, the present has sharper tints, and the school depended upon its reputation; and if he did lose his temper a dozen times a day it was tried at least twenty times, for boys are very strong on the emotional side and their views are fixed on material things. With all the little wear and tear, the disappointments, the incessant vexations over petty things, a peculiar strain, it was curious to notice, was given to the mind, a sort of breaking up the character into all sorts of old maidenish little rigidities

and the tendency to hysterics on somewhat trivial concerns.

Dr. Godfrey would come into the master's room beaming in his good-natured way and enlivening everyone with genial talk; when McTavish played billiards with him all was well, it was something cheering to receive his smile, bowing himself out to go to bed; but when Argyle played, and Argyle, McTavish said was lacking in discretion, things had all gone wrong that day; and when the Doctor missed that winning hazard that he used to make so easily—well, simply a geyser raged within, and discoursing on some particular affair such as the smudginess of a head-lined copy book the good old man would become enormously interesting less by the strength of the language he uttered than by the possibilities of what he was evidently doing his best to keep back. Then again though his heart when rightly touched was gentle as a woman's there were some points, his fine old English prejudices, on which the “armed rhinoceros” were not more impregnable and the “Hyrcan tiger”

simply food for infants. As they say of England, "no climate, all weather," it might be said of the worthy Principal—no disposition, all temper—"one rosy as the morn when throned on eastern wave it blushes o'er the world;" the other, Tartarus.

Ah, said he one day, as Austin approached his study where he was resting for a while. Come in, come in, and let us have a talk.

The beaming smile was on his face and said as plain as words, Ah, well, with all our trouble and worry and the strife of work let us at least enjoy these oases of friendly intercourse.

One could not but think what a good old soul he was.

I had a visit from Mr. Brixton last night, he began, and we were talking about the school. He declared he didn't think there was a better—anywhere. Look at the splendid fellows it has turned out. Look at his own son, Harold Brixton, look at Manton, what fine fellows they are.

Austin bowed.

It has been the ambition of my life to turn them out—after,—and here he seemed to be taking a tremendous gulp—after the style—of the British Aristocracy!

Austin could only bow. On reflection he recognized that of the British Aristocracy in detail he was merely in a state of ignorance. Therefore he simply bowed gravely.

Yes, continued Dr. Godfrey whose patience was great to-day, I am *connected with the Peerage myself!* on the mother's side. Her grand aunt was cousin once removed to Baron Dabchick of Dabchick Hall. The name is not Godfrey, you know—it is Dabchick-Godfrey.

Austin made a mental note that he would henceforth use the hyphen.

Yes Dabchick-Godfrey. I sat side by side once at an agricultural dinner with Lord Glandowne of Vandal Park.

Austin to be sure had never heard the name before. He was puzzled in his mind, both ways, wondering whether he was expected to felicitate himself, or signify some awe, in presence of one who had once at an

Agricultural Dinner sat side by side with—  
Lord Glandowne of Vandal Park !

Finding no definite solution he could only bow again. The good old man was rapidly losing his temper and Austin took his leave.

Strange fellow that, said Dr. Dabchick-Godfrey much displeased.

The classical master, Mr. Clapperton, to whom the Doctor always felt a certain deference, for he himself had been educated privately, and Clapperton was a Public School man, now appeared and made a much more agreeable listener. In fact, when Mr. Dabchick-Godfrey further remarked that his grandfather on the mother's side would have been a Bishop of the Church of England, but that his opinions inclined to the Broad Church, and further symbolized the Broad Church by comparing it to a vessel sailing between Charybdis and Scylla, Mr. Clapperton too was reminded that his uncle was Vicar of the same excellently steering ark ; and their conversation became confidential and highly interesting. Dr. Dabchick-Godfrey's very soul was in this theme of Broad Church as



against High Church, as well as the peculiar distinction amounting almost to a sort of heaven-blessed privilege of having relations with long drawn names, and in the fulness of his heart sought another opportunity of making a due impression upon Austin.

You ought to try and throw off, Brandt, that awkwardness, don't you know, that want of facility of yours. Let the best parts of your nature come to light. Go into company. You could soon take your own part. The attrition of minds you know brings polish and generates ideas, seek out the company of ladies too and music and singing and evening parties and refining amusements of that kind. I really take much interest in you and believe you have some good, *much* good in you, don't you know, if it could only in this way be brought out. Of course you have been precluded from many opportunities that others may have had of cultivation, and culture is a matter of association after all. Look at the British Aristocracy —

Austin fled.

Austin's chief pleasure was probably the

Sunday walks with Clifford, the more appreciated indeed because his pleasures had become very limited. Under Clifford's influence he was now an irreproachable model in demeanour, and tried hard to feel the absolute comfort and content of mediocrity. He was losing nearly all of what was left of his good spirits, and losing the wildfire atmosphere in which his soul had been born, but he conformed and, as at the eating of an unpalatable dish, made no wry faces. Clifford had complete respect for all conventionality, and was exceedingly impatient of the signs of mutiny. Therefore Austin allowed himself to feel persuaded of the wickedness of all those impulses in himself that did not seem to be orthodox. And he used to go to church with Clifford very dutifully, and sit under a preacher who if not eloquent was at any rate very earnest, and he would listen to Clifford's carefully impressed homilies upon not only the respectability but the spiritual advantages of all these observances. Yes, he was determined to see that to the end too.

Ah, said Clifford, there is something in Faith that goes beyond reason.

There must be, thought Austin.

And Clifford disciplined him not only with the Old and New Testaments, but even with the Commentators, and the Butlers and Paleys and Farrars and a host of others, and also, especially on any signs of rebellion, with Tennyson and Wordsworth.

However it be it seems to me  
'Tis only noble to be good.

This was his main theme, and he had made sure that Austin appreciated Wordsworth, quoting him at great lengths.

If thou be one whose heart the holy forms  
Of young imagination have kept pure,  
Stranger! henceforth be warned ; and know that pride,  
Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,  
Is littleness ; that he who feels content  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used ; that thought, with him  
Is in its infancy. The man whose eye  
Is ever on himself doth look on one  
The least of Nature's work, one who might move  
The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds  
Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou !  
Instructed that true knowledge leads to love  
True dignity abides with him alone

Who, in the silent hour of inward thought  
Can still suspect, and still revere himself  
In lowliness of heart.

All this was excellent, and Clifford could not but rejoice in that chastening of spirit which it had effected in Austin.

Clifford's influence was greatly aided by Austin's reflections on the pain which his way of transgression had caused; and for that influence he felt grateful. Yet as month after month rolled on he did not seem to be taking very firm hold, and the desires of his mind became expeditionary, here, there, and everywhere.

Do you know, Lacy, by the way, he writes, I have read very little poetry of late—nay that I am training myself on quite another fare. I like to talk away here among men who have in some productive work fought their way on in life—to talk of harvests and corn, the best kind of soils, its tillage; all this is excellent good discipline, children as we are of mother earth. There is something, too, eminently satisfactory in talking of hides, tanning, and every form of leather, shearing

of sheep and wool washing. The whole process of the iron industry from the taking of the ore from the deep pits to the smelting; the manufacture of implements of every kind, the structure of leviathan bridges down to Jack Clancy's needle; the vistas opened up at every stage of vast and again complicated industries and sciences; the beautifully delicate cookery of the Bessemer steel process, the spectroscope, bringing us again into regions of thought, immense, subtle, mystical, yet at a stroke the handmaid of our daily life; this wonderful continuity of forms and revelations, for thereby too we know what burns in Sirius: all this is an Epic,—vaster in sweep than we can dimly contemplate. Many a time in Tarylvalde did I enjoy a talk with old Sam Chubb, who knew the underground geography of the place better than I the visible above; and the hunt for gold, its difficulties, dangers, its operations, and devices, sounded to me a romance—a romance too with feeling deep as you like, for this toil brings sustenance as its reward, and raiment; and as I used to see old Sam with his chubby

youngsters scrambling on his knees beside his own fireside, the invisible bond that binds us all struck through me to the depths.

\* \* \* \* \*

Science growing even out of the practical shaping of his thoughts, began to have for Austin a deeper meaning now. He recognized the sway of thought and looking up from that again had flashes of the mystic woof that holds it all, and in the strivings of his intellect reached up to those stupendous forms that lead the soul to God. And from these projects now he saw the steps descend until they reach—no longer vulgar now—particular familiar things that make the daily round.

Betimes he smiled too with not inappreciative humour: Something incongruous at least in the wildness of his flights, and the never-ending ridiculous teasings of some or other youngster's humour of the hour. There were material prospects too to think about. The strange wondering outlook on the vast world must be made precise and toil must win out the way.

His opportunities were all restricted, there

was little help round about, and to Austin it seemed now more than ever that the only escape from the wretched shallows into which he had drifted lay in incessant and unsparing exertions of thought.

Austin's vigils began at length to tell on him.

He threw himself on the "heroic remedy," hard exercise. But when the mind is wearied, to pull away at a "string-test racing gig" until the body is worn out too does not always "physic pain." A chill threw him into a slight fever, and once given way he was soon laid low. This was a foolish baffling, and Austin fretted at his own weakness, but progress is not marked by outward striving merely.

It was at this time that he read the story of Christ once more. With mind elevated and thoughts vivid in their picturing he traced it out. The pilgrimage of that heroic soul—the gracious days of youth with the benison of nature on the brow, the sincere mind. The love that was the passion of that heart. Each recorded incident, every

detail fastened on his mind; the words of the Saviour stirred him. The great Epic with its terse and homely speech swept over him.

The temptations in the wilderness—*It is written man shall not live by bread alone. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.*

The Sermon on the Mount —

*And seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mountain and when he was set his disciples came to him: and he opened his mouth and taught them saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are*



*persecuted for righteousness' sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.*

*But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.*

*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

*Then saith he unto them my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death ; tarry ye here and watch with me.*

*And he went a little further and fell on his face and prayed, saying : Oh my Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples and findeth them asleep and saith unto Peter what, could ye not watch with me one hour ? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time and prayed saying, O my*

*Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Here is the man to whom Truth was all in all.

The temptations in the wilderness. The sermon on the mount. The woman taken in adultery. The praying in the garden. The silence before Pilate. The message: Love one another. The Cross.

He sought to translate himself to see the real scene: the impression of its dismal landscape; the bare rocks of Golgotha; the cleft in the rock close by the cross, the burial place; the Jews, his enemies, their hate; the poor people, his followers, their incapable grief-struck look; the Roman soldiers tossing their dice at the foot of the cross for his raiment; the two thieves writhing in agony upon their rough low blocks of wood; the central figure of the man who cried in agony, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me.—The essentially human tragedy comes home.

A sense of degradation lies oppressive on

the age in which the action is immersed ; an incubus, vile, of superstition, darkness, ignorance. Pitiable is the whole spectacle, humiliating, the sacrifice to selfishness and hate.

The life there lived and died, wrought out its work ; the figure on the cross is one of the most impressive surely in the story of our kind.

The thoughts that rushed in Austin's mind submerged him.

Human, said he, as we all are, our life, each petty act, is mystery, circling out in influence beyond the compass of our vain attempts. . . . I will hold my balance. I will not prostrate my intellect. I cannot live without that hope in truth. I will behold Christ too even as he comes home to me. I see a man of passion, power, will. A secluded man, a man nurturing his thoughts in loneliness, cherishing them in purity. A spirit of love, human, born of human feelings, yet with power above the frailer tone, bearing on to an appointed goal. A man with human fail-

ings. He wavers, struggles. He hesitates, he is in doubt. The vapour of myth about the life veils its realistic features. The mystery intimidates our souls. His influence was this, He spoke not as the scribes, but as one having authority. He renders a reason, that authority is gone.

### CHAPTER XIII.

AN inward change had come upon the neophyte. Not alone thought must he take into counsel with himself, but courage, faith, sincerity. Yet in the gradual restoration of his strength his mind allowed the access of rare poetic moods, incommunicable still in the dull cold symbols of an outer world. For returning home from long walks round the bay often in the evening time had he beheld, as he reached a spot that overlooked the picturesque and sleepy little town, the sun descend. Not as at Tarylvale was the sunset here ; stretching from far away behind those hills and over the sleepy looking town below in the hollow, with its few peaks and spires bathed in a shadowy medium, the atmosphere was tinged with

rich but mellow light—a warm suffusement as of a golden haze seemed to float above the town immersing the dim peaks, deepening in the hollows into duskier shades, lightened here away towards south'ard where the evening yet shone clear; the waters below were sleeping in their strength; the idle ships, the fishing boats, the piers were all absorbed into the same still picture, all. Austin, too, solitary, meditative, deeply serious, as he stood awhile and over the bay and over the sleepy town looked westward—and the golden haze was all about—felt that the fair enwrapping scene was one, and of which he too was part. . . . And slowly the stars began to appear, and the night had descended. . . .

How awful is this silent night.  
Alone I stand—with quivering soul,  
Uplifted—wondering—to the heavens,  
Bosomed in this great Eternity.  
The keen and crystal air, the holy light,  
The mysteries of space—inscrutable,  
The myriad maze of stars,  
All things of nature tranced to the tone,  
Deep of the omnipresent silence,  
Press their mystic being on me, O how fearfully.

Oh this wild, sad, yearning,  
This unknown presence, thrilling my faint soul.  
How wonderful this night.

. . . . .  
Alone. No, not alone.  
A myriad radiance  
Of spirit-winged light breaks forth.  
I pant with life amid the breathing air,  
The quickening skies, the living Universe ;  
And lo, being calm within, and resolute, serene,  
Now have I passed into a higher life,  
Sustained, and purified, inspired.

These were the moments that had seemed  
to Austin like the answer to a prayer

And now he was altogether renewed,  
and his daily walk was out to Karia Point.  
There standing on a high projecting cliff,  
not far from which a small company followed  
the prosaic business of burning lime, he  
would look out to the great ocean, its waters  
in never ceasing play, and feel the fresh  
breeze blowing to his cheeks, cool as it waved  
his hair ; and he drank in vigorous draughts,  
and his eye was elate with courage, and his  
soul sported in its strength, and his mind  
expanded unto nature's immeasurable vast.  
This was a wholesome stimulus and as the

billows danced and rolled and beat upon the shore, his heart too beat lusty strokes. From there too he could watch the fine ships, carrying for the most part wool and wheat, beating out through the tortuous passage and through the dangerous bar of the harbour. For a season he too had been thrown amid the shallows, doubting, wavering, looking round with eager, yearning eyes. . . . Now! he had set his sail upon the waters of the unknown deep.

Clifford, he said, I think too I can now see better your idea and feel more sympathy for that. When I went with you to church last night and felt the stirrings of the sweet music . . . ah, I crushed it down. I see its unrighteousness too. This habit, this complaisance of a lax mind, diversion into studies which absorb the mental energy, a certain ineptitude under the burden of this mystery, the strain, the waverings, the doubts of a lonely struggle—all these and other influences that a way of life insidiously brings had made me drift—almost to the habit of believing that our modern life is



Christian. No more of that, however, I mean to escape from this.

Clifford shook his shaggy hair in that peculiar earnest way of his, as he looked down between his knees.

No. No, Brandt, you're very, very, wrong. I scarcely know what to say. You haven't read the Bible—I mean carefully?

I have read the New Testament. I have endeavoured with as much earnestness as in me is to catch its spirit, to behold its meaning.

You have not read it under guidance—you can't form an opinion. You have not read it *exegetically*.

Austin smiled.

Well no, but do you also believe, as Bishop Weese seemed one night to wish to persuade us, that only students of the New Philology have any place in Heaven?

Clifford remained in his fixed attitude.

The fulfilment of the prophecies, has that been brought home to your mind, the miracles, that proof, and all that they mean; Paley's Christian Evidences too. Do you

understand the Revelation of St. John? Have you studied that? And he seemed to speak to himself more than to his hearer.

No, said Austin. Have you studied the Delphic Oracle? This position is so weak, so helpless of all cogency, that I turn away and try to realize how far this myth perverts the intellects of men. The recital of the miracles belittle the character of Christ. Is the founder of your religion a prophet, a gospel bringer, a truth bringer, or a wonder bringer—a thaumaturgist? The revelations of St. John are surely the ravings of a very madman. They bear the impress of their fantastic genesis in every line. To reason calmly—What is, to start with, the meaning of a vision, or will you burn me at the stake, which Hobbes, I think it was, but just escaped, when he inquired—What is the difference between a man seeing God in a dream and a man dreaming that he saw God? Whatsoever ideas come to a man in the development of his mind these only will he reproduce. Weave them together

how we will, distort them, construct them into every guise of Fancy, the pictures are still made up at last of what it has been given us to know. Dante builds Dante's image; Shakespeare, Shakespeare's. They bear in their core the record of their authorities. What then are John's? His images of glory—jasper seas, golden floors, blazing gems, costly vestments; images of horror—dragons, distorted beasts, eyes in tails, unnatural seemings. Is this the authorship of your God, or the work of an untutored mind, whose frenzy seeks expression? You would waylay me on side issues, Clifford, if I discuss the grounds of your belief. Milton is responsible I think for Hell, and with his grand "Hail holy light" traverses the mystic raptures that have descended from Plotinus. The Divinity of Christ has many semblances—The incarnation of the Logos, the Word of Origines, Philo's mystic Agent, the New Pythagoreans' Demiurg; back to the wild attempts of Plato and his school; then interknit with these, traditions, superstitions, shapings of Moses and of

Abraham, back to the dawn of our society, the communications of infantine prepossessions; and with these again, these dubious ideas marshalled, organized, and dominant, we behold at length the imposing structure of the Church of Rome, its pretentious sway of life and heart and intellect—that Octopus. Nay. With reverence be it said we have lived into a newer world. Our base is surer, our ideas higher, our task is more intricate. The heroes of the past—Hercules, Origines, Theseus, Stylites—we find them,—O astute German,—in the circus and the mad-house.

Clifford made no answer. He paced up and down the path.

His lips trembled, his face was white, and his long hair seemed to become loose as though falling over his forehead, and he brushed his fingers through it, then he rested his head between his hands on the fence.

Austin looked at him sombrely. He was not altogether the Clifford of old. He was always very well dressed now, with considerable attention to detail. His manner was more confident and assertive, his interest in

public affairs greater. He was a man, one might easily see, feeling the spur of ambition for the positions of his own little world. Even his features had changed. The plodding, serious, thoughtful cast, the thoroughly good honest face, was there underlying, but now his beard was trimmed fashionably, and he had the aspect of one whose opinions carried weight in the small assemblies of men. Clifford will go high in the world, thought Austin, he will escape by-and-bye into a world in which the little ambitions that now disturb him will seem but paltry indeed—with his resolution, his high character, thorough orthodoxy, his energy,—Clifford will rise high.

No, Clifford, said Austin, do not throw in your lot with me. You are ambitious, big prizes are within your grasp. Everywhere you are gaining influence, making friends. You do not want such a one as I. My pilgrimage is through a dreary track. Your prospects are of the brightest. Cut therefore the bonds that hold you in any way to me, or these prospects will be strangely

gloomed. You will meet not beckoning hopes, but looks askance. You would be driven in upon yourself, and unless you were a stronger man than you are would gnaw upon your heart. Clifford moved hastily away. Ah, thought Austin, he knows in the very innermost of his soul that the truth is not with him. Clifford, he said, you see with what a keen scimitar that scarcely shows the cleft our friendship has been severed. For it is not I who have done this thing nor wished it. . . . I leave this Sleepy Hollow with the best wish to be forgotten soon. We separate. I will follow your career, you mine no doubt.

Clifford said nothing. There were a thousand things to say that he had said to himself a thousand times. He seized Austin's left hand in both of his, and when Austin walked away did not enter the house at once, but stood long near the cypress tree by the verandah under the shadow there.

\* \* \* \* \*

And as he turned and stood looking at the litter in the room, the packed box, and empty shelves, Austin's mind wandered over his

school life ; and the faces of the boys with whom he had lived in the same house for so long came before him now.

Wayward, perverse, disappointing often enough ; now he thought only of those who were best of them, and what was best in them. The fresh young minds, lively, impulsive, the play of spirits ; the thousand graceful pictures in the playground, on the river ; in the country, the little pioneers on their long Saturday excursions ; those he had seen when their eyes met his in the singing that they sometimes held in the fourth class schoolroom, the wildest by the music and the words gently moved ; those he had seen thoughtful and studious in the library, sometimes sitting up late till it was time to put out the lights, when Austin had stood there with the long rod in his hand for turning out the gas overhead, and they had started from their absorption in the middle of the page, the cheerful voices—"Time already, sir?" as they met his smile and closed the book and put it carefully away, and looked happy as they said good-night to him ;—and then when

he used to bring the letters, the eager looks, the beaming pleasure, or as he had seen at times the solitary grief; then he thought of some of the youngsters he had seen and spoken to in his room—Locksley, the blue-eyed Garth, little Winterton now growing up, and others, and at this parting his heart was more full than it might have been with greater griefs.



## CHAPTER XIV.

To read your "Sartor Resartus," your "Data of Ethics," your "Kritik der reinen Vernunft" is not enough. We must find the Author's secret; thence build out the work. Wandering, tentative, ineffectual, our attempts in matters not of formulated scope or well determined theme: we are ploughing in the Serbonian Bog of the Dark Ages' metaphysics still.

Not Carlyle now, the fragmentary vague record of colossal power unknowing of its way; Spencer was his guide.

Sartor Resartus, mighty, epic, wonderful in humour, wonderful in pathos, wonderful in passion! The poetical elements are Carlyle's—these sprang out of the living man. Yet he is not a poet. There is the

strong elemental *motif* there, the poet's fire, the poet's vivid mind, but his spirit is an earth-born yet; it struggles, and leaps, it is not the winged genius of the poet.

Wordsworth sounds the notes of classic music; Shelley, ethereal strains; Coleridge strikes the lute full deftly. Carlyle has nothing of this. John Keats does not sing, or rarely. We see the thing itself that he has seen with all the vast associations that come sweeping from afar; and our spirits too take wings, and feelings in this plastic stress move through harmonious measures. There's a secret there.

Sartor Resartus, structurally biographical, is only tentatively philosophical. It is not ethically great. Epictetus on my left, Epicurus on my right, the "deep mouthed Boeotian" used to say. Perhaps in a newer day it could be said; Carlyle, if you will, on our left—Spencer on our right. Not this even. Let us seek out for our guidance all helpful men and duly reverence them—our spur and great exemplars—all who have toiled faithfully. The elemental passions,

the world of feeling mighty in its pulseful throbs upon our left ; the victorious Reason, with eyes to comprehend the woof that holds it all, upon our right.

Austin found in tracing out this plan a deep delight of mind as one might feel for a Beethoven symphony. When thought summed up to feeling, then his spirit in its throes sprang heavenwards. Nothing was mean that his life must touch.

Strong, he reflected. Has then truth struck the rightful spirit even into these coward nerves? Is it so? Is it that striving has brought strength? and exercise development? Yes, my strugglings have brought freedom ; and the campaign of life is still before me, and my mind is all unfettered. All else is but the golden — He smiled then as he thought of his promiscuous means of livelihood.

A downward step in the social scale, said Clifford.

I am my society, said Austin with sufficiency of epigram and shallowness.

Truth to say he had little other, for pupils

came but slowly. Those too who came at length at various times were of very varied character, and Austin began to discover that to be equal to his calls he must strive to imitate a Crichton's versatility.

To one he taught Mathematics, and the minutiae of Town Engineering; to another Latin and Greek; to another Political Economy and Logic; to another Roman and Greek History, English Grammar, Geography, and Book-keeping; to another Chemistry; and with a very honest fellow who had been once a carpenter and had made money by contracts he read the English Poets.

Austin's reply to the demands of his acquaintances why he should put so much exertion on himself was simply that a man must live—or at any rate that was the point of issue.

Thank Heaven, he assured Lacy, I have my shorthand and elocution in fair trim, but do you think I ought to brush up my dancing in case I may have to depend on that? If anyone comes for music lessons I'll refer

them to you, but if it's Theology I'll take them myself. See this fellow, (they were looking out of the window together one day after dinner and saw a burly figure approaching), I'm certain he'll want me to teach him boxing, for what else can he want? No it was not that, he came laughing to Lacy to say afterwards, he wanted me to "get him a billet," basing his claims of sympathy on the fact of his being an old Oxford man of the same College as Dr. Godfrey himself. He used to teach Classics once he assured me, but he had been "off colour lately, and your stuff gets rusty." The classic Greek I presume he referred to as "your stuff."

Well?

Well, finally he wanted me to give him a shilling to make up a sovereign that he was going to travel to S— with. I lent him eighteenpence and told him to be sure to give it to me when he saw me next!

Another besought Austin to give lectures on Spiritualism as he "heard you were given that way;" a literary acquaintance wanted him to "go partners in a comic

social paper ; ” one hopeful told him he was going to India in a fortnight and thought a little Railway engineering would be useful to him there ; could he learn it in that time ?

Never did a poor scholar work so hard and yet withal so cheerfully.

Austin’s mind pricked on the wit of others, but as Lalla Rookh saw ever her favourites pass away, so saw he his hopeful pupils. The stern hard work was to the aspirations as the ha’porth of bread to the intolerable deal of sack. Austin pushed on. There was a wolfishness of energy about him as of the man hungering for the spiritual bread of life. Even sympathy he must not have. Sympathy absorbs time in exercise ; would weaken fortitude. Yet this was not the manner that his nature loved.

On Saturday afternoons at times he and Lacy used to go to Cloveridge to the open country to ramble there awhile ; and his elastic spirits leapt again to play. The scenery was simply that of fields of long slope with quiet little valleys between, and Lacy used to laugh at the poor scholar’s

enthusiasm. No, no, Lacy, do not laugh, Austin used to say, laughing himself. Let us remain here not for an hour, but through the long hours, let us, if only once, wander in this pleasant place the livelong day. Let us know the soil, the trees, and all the ups and downs; and those carters there let us know them, their horses, their carts, their wood. Nay do not laugh Lacy! In years to come we will have need of this. In our march through life we pass through deserts, cities where the air is not pure, and our thoughts stifle and struggle. Then to recall this scene—to know and feel man's ultimate dependence, (we the children of the earth), the bounty of nature, and the fealty of each to each.

Fresh and bracing was the air to be sure, and the landscape stretching away had a pleasant outlook. Up one long stretch of hill-side Austin used to take the long whip, and, putting on the big voice of the carters, urge to their toil the gallant teams, snorting, flanks smoking, but staunch. Midway was a resting place, and there on the corner of

a fence hard by he would often sit and propose to Lacy's and his own delight, questions to the honest woodmen of deepest metaphysical import.

Some of the answers had much native wit; the old men would gravely argue and Austin socratically examine their replies.

What makes me laugh more than anything else, Lacy used to aver, is the interest you take in what they say and the judicial gravity with which you hear them out.

I like these old men, said Austin. I like all old men much better than young ones—pragmatical with fopperies. There is a befitting reverence about these tough old wood carters. I like them very much. They lead a healthy life.—They see the sun rise and the sun set and hear the voices in the woods and often stop to look and listen doubtless in the mellowing even-tide. There's a religion in all that. Those that have children in the school too brighten when they talk of them. After all it is from the ranks of healthy natural men that our geniuses come forth and here in this bright



land of the sun of ours the future is before us all.

They were very good friends and used as Austin and Lacy walked along with them to give away their confidence.

The two were set down as landscape painters, and Austin found that some of his carters too had a good eye for fine effects of scenery, and had good prints and the like of pictures in their houses, good books to read there too; and they would bring out with them the prizes their children had won, to show.

Thank Heaven, cried Austin in delight, we are living into a brighter day. Ah, Lacy, if I were rich, it is here I would pitch my habitation. On Sundays I would make these fellows free of my house. We would be good friends. My wife would play for them—Balfe, Bellini, Schubert, or what not; their children would sing glees, roundelays, choruses; they would picnic in my garden; and under the shade of trees we would tell stories, and talk Democracy. Education, education, that's our watchword. Merit

the one test of preference, that is our banner.

Other spirits to be sure were not touched to such fine issues.

There's Bob, said one of them to Austin, one of the most good-natured-damned-friendliest fellows in the world. He'll drink with you all day long !

Wherein is culture ?

To develop, to rise to higher forms of life—not bedizen with an outward show. Has not the mind proportions, structures, its subtle world, more exquisite than vases or the fragments of an earthly mould.

The world of thought, the world of action, the world of feeling, their play and mutual control; is there nothing here in this keen touch to win from luxury, from sloth, from tawdry toys ?

## CHAPTER XV.

WHAT had been the course of Lacy's life? For we must leave him now.

To look closely would fill us with a dreary questioning grief.

When Austin had left Dudley Lacy was full of good resolutions to devote himself industriously to his profession, and even drew upon a piece of paper a long list of reasons why this was very advisable.

But it would have required a very stern drill to make Lacy a *nisi prius* advocate.

He remained briefless, but consoled himself by writing odes and sonnets, and even more pretentious works for weekly magazines.

Poor Lacy. Lively, sincere, bold as a lion, he yet oftentimes called life a buffeting farce, and already cold failure was tracking

him down. With his intellectual gifts, one he had neglected to train within himself, the power of commanding the others. His ambition was great, but it seemed to lack a spur. The "prize that toiling years could put within his grasp"—ah, yes,—but, no. Lacy could have leapt into the widening gulph to save his mother city. He could have led a forlorn hope or dashed upon a Malakoff. A revolution would have clad him like a mantle, the glorious battles of a nascent Republic. He was a man who might have stood at the pump where he had toiled to save the sinking ship, and waved his hand with a smile as the last boat with the women and children was clear of the side.

\* \* \* \* \*

However, respecting his odes and his sonnets and his songs.

There was something original in these but few shared the poet's secret. They were sent duly to the waste paper basket.

I think I know, writes Lacy, why my productions for some time have been rather works of art and trifles than the outcome of

true inspiration. I have been trying to keep my life and my art distinct. It does not do. To succeed it seems necessary to live for art.

Doubtless Lacy made a brave attempt at this but it was a case of "Love in a hut, with water and a crust."

And that "Love, forgive us," Keats says, "is cinders, ashes, dust."

Lacy perhaps persuaded himself that with the inspiration of fresh country fields, retirement, meditation, the muse would be propitious; in point of sober fact, though, his reason for leaving town was simply secular.

Nor did he find that secluded worship of nature that might have been enjoined on him; for Lacy who had the poet's love of solitude, and whose mind in solitude was tinged with melancholy, yet also loved company, the flowing discourse, and the lively play of wit.

Poor Lacy. Lonely he used to sit in the evenings while his mind wandered, and often at some old familiar remembrance or the strains of an old song, whether Bonnie Annie Laurie or the Wearing of the Green,

feelings would crowd upon him suddenly and sweep along in painful agitation. The joy and the pain of the poet, the struggle to exalt the mind, the longing for the flight; the glimpse, the escaping vision, the dull mind void.

Nevertheless Lacy tried hard to cultivate studious habits, and surrounded himself with solid books—Leake's Real Property, Chitty's Contracts, Anson's Contracts, Broom's Maxims.

The Transfer of Lands Statute was a particular delight. There was advancement in the future, he said, and an outlet for his talents then. Meanwhile it was rather dreary toil, and very gradually he fell into the habit of going out to the "Dew Drop" in the evenings, just to take a turn round the billiard table and see the evening paper from Dudley, and hear what was going on; and be hailed with great delight, and keep the company in rare good spirits, and drink whisky, and get home in the "wee sma' hours," and wake up a good deal ashamed of himself, but with a certain craving for

stimulants. He had earned the popular reputation of being "a dam'd clever fellow, especially when he's got a little on board."

Sunday.

DEAR AUSTIN,

How little even those, whose souls are in closest communion know of each other!

There are secret places even the most open heart shuts to all save our own consciousness, strains of evil which we must jealously hide from all, from those who love us best. I know not what has led me to this train of thought. I may have seemed somewhat arrogantly to have assumed the possession of the poetic faculty; you may have thought it a manifestation of undue egotism in me. You do not understand it. I *dare* not doubt. The conviction of self-deception would be my moral death. I can recognize the intrinsic loveliness of virtue but my purity of soul is not such as to follow it for its own sake, "to scorn delights and live laborious days" in its service, because it is true and beautiful.

Unbelief in myself would be an awakening to have "No hope, no fear; for they can know no fear, who have no hope." I can love my art for its own sake, but once the certainty of failure, and a paralysis of all my faculty, an apathy would follow.

I have been reading James Thomson's "City of Dreadful Night." It is the agony of a strong spirit lost in doubt and uncertainty, without hope or faith, utterly lost; a wail of despair, human but awful in its intensity.

However enough of this! the sun is bright and all without seems cheerful but I feel dismal enough, God knows. My health has been poor lately and I miss your society more than you think. Our old walks are a poem to me.

Write to me soon of what you are doing, talk of yourself, talk of art, of the glorious spirits who have passed away yet left their marks behind. Write of anything, but write.

With all the love in my heart

Yours

LACY.



DEAR AUSTIN, . . . .

At present I am indifferent to that stimulus for an act in my life-drama is being played. I can tell you no more at present as I am determined to fight the Devil in my own way though it may cost me dear.

LACY.

. . . . You must not think I did not tell you my trouble from any fear of your being hard or unsympathetic. It was simply from a sort of superstitious conviction that I must fight the battle single-handed that I refrained. How cursedly tempting came those whispers of defeat. . . .

LACY.

And so with this irregular life Lacy fell desperately sick at last of rheumatic fever, and lay long between life and death, and passed through pain and delirium. And all this time Sarah Bilton, the daughter of mine host of the "Dew Drop," nursed him with incessant care forgetting her own misery in her anxiety for him. And when in the days of convalescence he saw her worn and weak and pale nearly as himself, and felt the hours

wretched when she was not there, and felt a warm comfort when she would come again and ask him with a smile half-bright and half-patient how he was, Lacy would be a heartless wretch, he said, if he did not marry her. And he told her this, and she began to weep, and to say that she was not fit for him, and she was only an ignorant country girl, and a country publican's daughter, and that it was all her own fault, she felt shame before him now, and that he would soon get tired of her,—and then she could get no further, and Lacy soothed her, and said she was far too good for him, and that this illness had given him a steadier, and that they would yet be happy he hoped.

He married her, and tried to find content and comfort in his country life; and she blamed only herself when she saw him drooping at times into melancholic fits. She was a very good housekeeper, and Lacy used to praise everything she did and everything she made, her puddings and pies, her scones, her tarts, her cakes. He used to tell her that no one but herself could make a cup of coffee

to his taste, and that their little house was better than a palace. One could smile to see how delighted this praise made her.

To AUSTIN;

To be sure I am not getting very rich, but perhaps I am much better off than I deserve. The less musty-fusty law business I have, I ought to console myself, the more leisure have I for pastoral delights. I walk a good deal about the country which is very picturesque—dotted with troops of pleasant little hills, rejoicing in their greenness as though spring days would last for evermore. The bright green crops and freshly springing vines, the elastic herbage under foot are rich with promises of happy days, full granaries, and reeking wine presses.

My house stands tip-toe upon a little hill and fronts a garden sweet with lilac bloom and garmented with green. My days pass very quietly—I stroll abroad, oftenest alone, play billiards rarely now, or sometimes a sedate and solemn (game?) no worship of bowls with some old devotees.

Sarah is too good for me—that's a fact.

In the evenings we often walk or sit in our little garden, in silence I like it best, with no sound but perhaps the curlew's dreary wailing from afar, old Ponto's cheerful barking close at hand, or merry crickets singing in the grass.

There I meditate many things and as my imperfections are frequently the subject I often sadden myself more than is healthful. Spiritually I maintain a quiet passivity. I will not call it wise, for lack of motion not unfrequently ends in stagnation. I have little impulse to create, not being conscious of any "message," and so write seldom and then not with strength and earnestness. I know not if I am in a transition state or not but I lack a motive and yet seldom seriously feel the need of one.

Mental effervescence is not a happy state, especially as there is too frequently an uncomfortable doubt as to the nature of the product in state of formation. Yet I believe and know that it is infinitely preferable to, and more enjoyable, than the dead, dull level of routine.

I know not if I wronged Clifford. Probably I have; if so God forgive my rash judgment. I do not feel myself fit to judge others though I do and have done so hastily and on insufficient grounds. My nature used to be very trustful and if it is becoming warped I fear I have only myself and my knowledge of myself to blame.

Come and see me, dear Austin, if you can, or write at least. I miss you always.

Yours as ever

LACY.

Ideals ?

Even from my inmost soul a small voice saith

Such utterance is mocking and untrue.

How canst thou hope to realize thy dream,

Since perfect loveliness is never seen

But by the eyes of purity —

LACY.

DEAR AUSTIN,

I am in doubt about all things. At night lying in the darkness, shorn of the pretences and disguises of daily life wherewith we almost deceive ourselves and whereby we veil ourselves from ourselves and from the world, I catechise myself and torture my mind with self-inquisition, profitless perhaps and

nigh unendurable, yet unavoidable. I say that *I* torture myself, and truly it is that terrible I, the inmost Ego, the hidden spring of my purer and more natural instincts, that reproaches my hypocrisy, exposes my shallow shams. Then I apply to myself the words in Hyperion

Thou art a dreaming thing—a fever of thyself—

I have lately written

His own identity o’ershadows him as with a curse,  
He lives and moves within his past experience,  
And remembrance of that irrevocable past  
Outweighs the natural strength and firmness of the  
soul.

However it is now broad daylight and the ghosts of last night’s torments have fled before the frank face of the sun.

Experiences and impressions such as these are not usually associated with the idea of a “rising young barrister;” and so when Lacy came to Dudley again to push his fortunes, it was not in law but in Journalism that he saw his only prospect of eking out a living.

He toiled desperately in his way and wrote

innumerable articles,—“Evolution in Novels,” “Some Canons of Criticism of Poetry,” “The Dramatic Faculty in Shelley,” down to “Unearned Increments,” “Mediums of Exchange,” “The Differential Factor in Long Girders,” “The Noses of Great Men,” etc., etc. These articles of his all showed a man of lively intellect, but it would have fared badly indeed with him were it not for a series of humorous “Views about Town,” and a weekly “Dramatic Notes.”

These latter made Lacy’s company courted by all the actors and actresses in town, for he was somewhat keen as a critic and cherished the hope of seeing “the Drama elevated to the influence which it ought always to wield.”

And so with theatrical society and much frivolous talk and late suppers and far too much champagne, and a habit it was said of opium eating too, and conjugal incompatibility—his wife inferior, he unfaithful—, and fierce fits of black remorse, and the wasteful, irrelevant tumults of the drunkard, and with a heart-disease occasioned by his

rheumatic fever, and aggravated by this dissipated life, the months with Lacy were rolling on, and the dreams of his youth grew dimmer or came in vivid flashes only now.

But then his poems got abroad at last; those love songs of his were everywhere, from the gilded halls, the gay soirees, the concerts, and the *fêtes*, to Sam Chubb's comely little lassie, Nancy, as she used to sit knitting stockings humming to herself; and the youngsters as they trudged to school whistled them, and the organ grinders at street corners ground them out.

So Lacy became a celebrity; and because he was a celebrity he was invited out by many people who did not like the doctrines of his poems very much and did not feel the subtle spirit of his songs.

\* \* \* \* \*

And so the fame that these half-a-dozen little songs of his had won for him seemed to have evaporated; and in the solitary hours of his broodings when painful thoughts brought him to a woman's weakness often, perhaps no whisper ever came to him of a



larger fame, of his works incorporated into the national literature, himself sung and celebrated, anecdotes culled from every source related of the poet, monuments erected; or if they did, they brought him, sick at heart, no comfort, and he would ask wearily what then is the use of this fame, dreaming vaguely of what might have been !

And long after, when separated, Austin heard of his death; heard how drunkenness had grown upon him, devastated him; how he would even seek out the lowest company and sing ribald songs at times, and borrow money for drink, and sleep at last in gutters; how he was “persecuted” as he called it for debt . . . how, too, poor little Sarah toiled like a heroine to keep their habitation clean at least.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE receipt of reason a limbeck only ?

What intelligence of man will ever make that fiery leap, from brain to soul, the machine to the idea ? Galen, Stilling, Ferrier, ten thousand workmen who have traced ten thousand paths in the brain—is there no help ?

None. Not even could the eye behold, and grasp, the myriad play of nerve-cells, molecules, atoms. It has been given us but the merest owl's blink at the frame work, and a clue unique through all the labyrinth.

Every image, every act, has its physical correlative within the brain.

Destroy a path, and a portion of life—action or sensation—will have been lost ; bring into thought a false idea, a fantasy,

a path out of gear with the eternal fitness of things has been added ; in both an element of madness—the reality without its image, the image unrealized.

The life of Faith is often a destruction of natural thought. Our life of research is a life of tentative efforts—hypothesis, testing.

Everything false is madness. From sanity to lunacy the line is unbroken.

Columbus is sane, and a world is the prize.

Ponce St. Leon is mad. The Fount of Perpetual Youth is a myth. Utopia is still in the air.

Swift in the extravagant flights of his fancy foretells a strange scientific result. Swedenborg on the Brain is often scarcely less happy.

Kepler, the astronomer, Kepler the mystic ; Newton, the physicist, Newton the alchemist ; Descartes the geometer, Descartes of the pineal gland ; Leibnitz of the Calculus, Leibnitz of the Theodicée ; Hugh Miller on Old Red Sandstone, Hugh Miller on the Deluge ; Cuvier on the Mastodon, Cuvier on Moses ; Kant of the Nebular Theory, Kant

of the nebular phantoms ; the bold speculation that illuminates the world ; the Will o' the wisp that leads into the bog ; how thin the partition.

Even as the child praying to the mother plucks at her gown, even as the ghost of Patroclus importunes the wroth Achilles, even as to the deaf ear the child bursts out in sobs, in tears, in cries, in maledictions, so Austin. It was the mutiny of a soul that once had sought for light, guidance, succour. It was madness. Behold the madness of Nero gazing at his victim, Britannicus, writhing in death at his feet, Nero lowering over the tempestuous flames of Rome, Nero slaying the mother who bore him, slaying the wife he had taken with love to his heart — the despair of a soul searching an answer, the mad appeal to a God of Anger, the onslaught, the mutiny, the desertion, impious rage, the searching the cruel, the devilish, that which cannot be and man live—unsmitten, unanswered ! Madness, madness, madness. Whence comes this searching for things that lie beyond us ?

the half instinctive prepossessions, the bewilderment, the fever, the fire of Baal, Moloch, Juggernaut, Atys, Origines, Bernard, a primordial instinct of all the generations? Whence it is impossible to say. But with the light of new science, the downfall of old beliefs, these ashes are not extinct, these cries not stifled, for we are still unanswered, still tempest-driven as of yore.

On the brink of death,—was it an angel that snatched him from that trespass? Was it a demon that threw him in recoil from the gulph at his feet?

Such are, as in the old story of Troy, the dramas that are played in Olympus.

Our story is told of to-day. None the less, our lives are played out beyond our scope and our ken. Our reason is but a bubbling,—frail, intermittent. Our life a region gloomy—but in the Chiaro-oscaro another vision appears. It is the revolt from the Stoics, the Cynics—the distrust of adversity, pain, defeat. Let us search for an impulse to life, the generous warmth—*our whole theme is but this*—the hatred of evil,

the search for the good genii of life, ἡδωνή (Hedone). Who then is the flower of our race? Who then has touched the spire of a beautiful life? Alcibiades? Speak, Greek youth, with the beautiful eyes, whose hair throws the fragrance of health to the winds. Still here is madness, and madness in Byron, and folly in Rousseau.

Where is the man?

Where is the stroke sharp and true, the blood sane?

\* \* \* \* \*

And what of Darwin—?—The subtlety of intellect, the brightness of genius, does not suffice to win out the greatest of intellectual gifts—the boldness of soul is essential, the undaunted address to the toil, and the truth. Not merely keenness of logic suffices for the work that that man effected.

The path opener must have the imperishable fire of the hero.

Behind the Data of Ethics one feels the serried march of the generations of men.

There is a passionate strength that goes

with the leap of the mind in the deep, trenchant experiments of Schwann.

Yet in this strange *mêlée* of life your Spencer speaks but to the electic few, your . . . wins the ribbons and the stars. For we wander mostly in Serbonian Bogs with will o' the wisps for guides. Each particular delusion is the Caabah of the pilgrim whose steps have thus far led. Those who have struggled furthest towards the light are the solitary pioneers.

Smite therefore hard and roar like the Bull of Bashan? Swell the "baaing vanities" in chorus loud enough? Is it not enough that the flock follow even to the slaughter-house?

\* \* \* \* \*

Austin had penetrated into the temples of science.

Better truly be a door keeper here, than a gilded mask in the courts of false pomp. And so through the years he had bent his spirit to severe intellectual work. He had toiled in good faith.

Leicht bei einander wohnen die Gedanken  
(Easily one with the others dwell the

thoughts), in the words of the great German poet. *Schwer* bei einander wohnen die Gedanken (In contest one with the others dwell the thoughts) cries the German biologist.

The intellectual life is also a contest—endowments, passions, ideals,—the conflict is endless. And yet again, but dimly half-conscious to ourselves—our world, and our race, a millenium of strife, are sweeping us on to some strange, distant goal.

Austin felt the impulse to movement. Like a new sense had entered into his soul the contemplation of misery, grief, the serfdom of man; with a hate that was part of his vitals he beheld now the Moloch, superstition, injustice, untruth.

He had turned to himself. Wretch! Where are your battles, your high trusts, your fame, your power! Behold the unescapable shallows,—a life that derides you. Eagle!—fool, wade with the storks!

His hopes mocked him, his very ideals.

Magnanimity, freedom of soul, superior thoughts—ruin!

Be therefore in the van of circumstance!



The words were still a spur. His soul rose in its strength at the thoughts of great deeds. But where the outlet, where? O that my life, he cried, might be made the offering to some one imperishable action.

What were the standards of men? He saw himself, — and a mortal denial had entered his soul,—a mere tool, an instrument in the arrangements of life, to be served of, to be cast aside, to be rated as that.—His soul,—it was a merchandize.—He felt himself crushed down by the stupendous weight of that structure, the clodded earth, the iron, and gold, and at the summit beheld the dull things, the fetiches worshipped by men—clay to my soul of fire! He revolted.—Am I mad? The vast emotions that rise up within me like a world peopled and living, bearing on to its goal.—Is this all a myth? . . . He was struggling for an outlet. Then a sense of loneliness seemed to have enveloped him. Even as in the darkness, in seclusion, we are removed, are thrown back within ourselves, and outward things that have been real are known with but half un-

certain intimations; even as in the desert where, from the region where we saw the great sun rise sweeping round to the region where the sun is low descending, the eye ranging finds no cheer, and the heart stirs with a wild suggestion, half of desperate attempt, and half of stifled fears; as one exiled in a foreign land may long to hear the mother tongue if only once again;—so Austin walked along the streets and looked into the faces of men; it was as though a mist surrounded them; an impenetrable distance separated those whose shoulders brushed him by; he saw, interpreted with formal things; they were visions; not as in Tarylvale where as a boy he looked upon his home, and things inanimate appealed to him in their familiar sort, and reposing in the lap of mother earth he saw her face benign—now the broad daylight, the garish streets, the walls, all was a strange land, he a toil-tasked slave.

He lifted his soul up to God.

Hear me, receive me—Thou who beholdest all things  
with one view.

In Thy service where do I stand?

Shall I die? Shall I die?

I, a false shoot!—Shall I die with the hour?—lost in  
the infinite ocean of life.

No—No—to work ere I go, have outlet and scope <sup>for</sup>  
power,

Bear record of what Thou hast given,

Know myself,—reveal,—is to me, then, nothing re-  
vealed?

Prayer is my solace, my hope,

Yes to me, alone in the world, casting aside the tra-  
ditions of others—their stay and their guide,

Facing the steeps,

Alone—alone to perish or live,

Perish!—no—too fearful that fall. I! *I am Thy*  
*creature.*

I cling to the truth, hoping, endeavouring—

Is there light—the glimmering dawn?

O God I pray to Thee—

In deep toned monotonous tones

Sombre, laden with sorrow,

Inarticulate, vague attempt,

Inexpressive, inadequate cry, . . .

Yet not wholly futile and vain, but nourished in hope.

In language unvaried in form, I pray.

O God, I pray to Thee : the enveloping thought, the  
thought of my life, its potency, impulse, directive,  
I offer . . .

To Thee, O God.

With hunger of the heart Austin pressed  
on, struggling; flung often to abysmal  
depths.

His ideals were afar from him, dreams.

Old fires smouldered, mutinies. His soul

had been like a rioting bawd, reckless, abandoned.

But it was still the hope of something better than himself; the clinging to blind Evangels. And often, when, as in the olden habit of supplication, he would fall at night on his knees by the bedside, visions of a Land of Promise appeared.

With slow explicative work; again, with eager impetus, with desperate energy, he fell to on his tasks.

Exaltation, depression, a constant undulation, is the law of emotion, physical in base,—a reservoir, emptied, then filled.

Once he remembered standing on a balcony, looking westward to the setting sun. He was worn with toils. A sense of failure was urged upon him. Flushed with poetic dreams, his hopes, his aspirations, had appeared again, clear, glorious, broad; then he saw them as visions in the upper air, fading; he seemed sinking, sinking in the actual depths of a huge world, peopled still with living forms. But with no word for him; terrace upon terrace it seemed to rise,

the inhabited land, world over world, yet all in one; above him, high, higher, higher, he saw the impossible steps to scale; in the blue Heaven unattainable were the fields—were they not a birthright?—where his soul might walk abroad, happy, blessed of God. No. He had denied God. He had denied the God of the Hebrews!

*He saw in imagination the Spirit of the Earth arise, colossal, fearless, free, and walk out to the mighty portals there, out to the setting sun, on the limits of the Earth, standing; and his voice rang out through those stupendous halls, crying, Where is God? Where is God? Where is the God of my home? And no answer came.*

The fume like the smoke from a flickering flame passed off from his brain. Half-dazed, but sane, he was still standing there—what had he gained? The sense of desolation on a lonely quest. Turn back, find stay and hope where others have found Faith, and are nourished day by day. Yield. Raise thine hand to be lifted once more to the car.

A spirit impelled him. Deny the spirit !  
*Slay the immortal within.* Be of us.

And the sun was sinking low, and the duskier hues were gathering overhead, and the intimations of the night were coming on, and the beatings of his heart were slow and forced, and at each heaving of the chest the words came with monotonous beat,

No—no—no—no.

Where was the hope, the stimulus, the faith ?

Subdued, he felt the impress of a sadness that he faintly struggled to resist.

A little child came to the window. She looked up at his face, and she stepped out with spontaneous childish confidence, placed her little hand in his, and again looked up to the light of his eyes, and smiled. He had not seen her, but the touch waked him, and a warm feeling like a wave rolled over him. He raised the child fluttering in his arms and kissed her.

## CHAPTER XVII.

For some time past Austin had been made uneasy by letters from home about his father's health. This illness was not independent of some distress of mind, he guessed, and doubted whether his own presence would alleviate that suffering.

There was no solution for it, but his own surrender and penitence declared. He had long passed the time for that.

Then came a letter from his mother telling him of the accident. The mine had been flooded with water, and in rescuing two of the men who were below his father had hurt his health, already weak.

Austin was alarmed. Three days he begged from duties.

Mrs. Grey was at the station. Harold

had driven in with her and had the buggy waiting. On the way thither she took his arm and began to weep.

The father had been in a high fever. They had been in constant attendance. His condition now was critical.

On the way out she related the circumstances of the accident.

The mine adjoined another which had been long ago abandoned and was partly filled with water. Of this a survey had been made some years before and from that record it appeared that the drive of the Golden Club was still a considerable distance away and so out of danger of a bursting through. The survey had been carelessly made, a fatal error arose through the employment of a compass to take bearings instead of a theodolite.

Well they were nearer than they thought. Father was not altogether comfortable about the old survey, but the drive was filled with water now. The next day he was going to call a special meeting of the Board of Directors to see what steps to take, but in



the middle of the night Jim Murdoch came knocking at the door and crying out that the water had burst through.

He would not wait to properly dress himself but ran up as soon as he could with Murdoch to the mine. He found the people there in a great state. It was a change of shift and there were two Chinamen only below, and the water was rushing in in such a way that no man could stem it, and they thought they must be drowned. As soon as he heard it, he didn't think a moment but went down in the cage. Others wanted to go with him then, but he said that was useless. He took nothing with him but a rope, and the water was rushing in now like a great stream, filthy dirty water it was with a sort of gas coming out of it. He had to make his way about a quarter of a mile along the drive to the jump-up where he thought the Chinamen would be if they were alive at all; and so he fought along in the dark with the water up to his breast and not knowing how soon it would be over his head altogether; and when he got to the jump-up,

he found them there huddled together out of the reach of the water and a candle light just flickering, dying out, in the foul air. They were nearly dead with fright and although they knew it was their only chance he could scarcely get them to go along with him. At last he did though, marching them on in front of him, and all three were saved. When they were brought to the top the Chinamen were more dead than alive, and Watkins took one of them to his house to have him tended to, and Gregson the other, so they were all right. Father did not tell anyone how ill he was, but when he came home he was white as a sheet and shivering.

Mama had made some warm broth for him and he took that and said he felt all right, but next day he was not able to get up and since then he has been in a fever.

Oh, Austin, he is so noble, so great. You must do everything to please him now. For truly your conduct has been to him a greater blow than this sacrifice—perhaps of his life.

She talked on. Austin was overcome in grief, but a sad smile dwelt a moment on his face.

I wonder if it is the same through all history, he mused. The records of appearances, acts, testimonies, often present mere caricatures. I have heard people described minutely, every word of that description literally true, but the image I had formed absurdly false.

Who can trace out the complex tanglements of other times and give a picture? Nation's changes have been wrought from causes intellectually grotesque, from the Crusades down to Communism. What is the value of a barren record? Who can show the forces in their play; how those forces act upon us now? Who can dimly see the woof that holds our social Present? Trace out the changes, impacts of changes, each on each? History is mainly fiction; overrated too at that.

They had now reached home. His mother and the others met him in great tribulation,

he could not see his father then. The next day was Sunday, and that day too he could not see him.

In the little village church near by service was being held. He wandered there and listened to the singing. The evening was mild, and there was a pervading quietness about the scene. He was standing near the fence by the church. He had met there Mrs. Shenstone once. The music of the church harmonium and the fresh young voices of the village choir in its rise and fall, struck gratefully upon his ear. It was panted out, but with the distance mellowed the music came as if beaten from silver shells. They sang "I know that my Redeemer lives." Austin had known them all from childhood living here in this secluded spot.

It's a good influence, he said, living the uneventful round of peaceful lives, working cheerfully throughout the week, they look forward to this day of rest—its peculiar sabbath influence, this service where they meet together and their spirits are refreshed again.

The thought of gracious influence came on him too; he looked back to the days of former happiness, of cheerful unsuspecting faith. That he were a Christian! that he might throw the whole fervour of his spirit into prayer on bended knees. To give up the burden of his grief and all temptations on the Saviour's breast, find in the Redeemer's promise solacement for all. A moment so to weakness half resigned, his spirit leapt now to its fullest bent.

No, no, he cried, 'tis false. Better the isolated mind, this lonely self; better from mine the averted eyes to see, for mine will not avert; better the contempt of fools; poverty, its rude coarse contact and its slur. This I can know and feel. But bright my spirit burns within and high above untoward fate that spirit and the truth erect me.

Not merely by the years of his doubts, Austin was an era distant, he was a race removed, from the faith of his fathers. He was far nearer the Mythology of the Greeks than the Mythology of the Christians. Fact too enigmatic for the mind of Matthew

Brandt; yet he had the feeling of a strange dissimilitude, an unknown difference.

I was born for rebellion, cried Austin in agony, falling on his knees. No, he rose again, I was born for Victory.

The next day he was admitted to see his father. The first sight shocked him.

The grand physique, the ruddy tinge, the tone of the strong man had given way—now he lay ghastly pale but for the red spots in his cheeks; his face was sunken. When he stretched out his arm Austin saw how wasted it was. Neither spoke for a long time.

Well Austin, said Matthew Brandt at last, and a smile flitted over his lips, this will finish me, I think.

I hope not, was all that Austin could reply.

I am satisfied, Austin. I have but done my duty. I am at peace, Austin. The storms of the world have passed over me for ever. I have done with it—It is you I think of now, Austin. It is you I have been thinking of always. You know that. I built

great hopes of you, Austin, but these I will not see fulfilled. I always tried to make you good and brave and thoughtful and wise. I thought your talents would lead you to ambition, and I wished to give you a guide and stay. Well that was not to be; perhaps my hopes for you had too much in them of worldly show. I will not speak reproachfully to you now. I do not think I ever felt that. But will you talk this matter over with me now for the last time, and think what it is that makes me speak like this?

Let us first say a word or two over your prospects in life. You wished to be an engineer. It is one of the noblest professions—what perhaps I would myself have chosen if I had had the advantages that have been given you. I had to toil my way out in another fashion. Then you changed your mind, when all the drudgery of it was passed. H'm. Then law. I always thought it the proper stepping-stone to politics, and I thought with a clear field in this young country and everything to spur you on, that you would make something. Whatever idea

you had—the law's the thing! All the highest prizes are there. And he related to Austin the careers of men he had known, whose abilities he could not esteem but to be inferior to his own, and of energy and staying power feeble enough; but who had got into their right grooves and had passed him in the race. And the memory of old rivalries and contests revived—Had I my time—and the flame of his secret ambitions had leapt to the eyes, the mask of the face was eager, powerful. He had half-raised himself in the bed. . . . Ah, he sighed, and sank back, then added, without regarding Austin, All the big prizes are in the law.

Austin bowed but said nothing, and the father waited till he recovered his strength. Then he followed out step by step carefully the course of Austin's life, reminding him curiously of things that he had himself almost forgotten, speaking in a very low voice and half to himself as though sparing Austin the reproach of having made so wretched a plight.

That's the end of your fine education and



all your reading and your ambition. Think what you might have done.—Any prize was in your grasp,—resolution, resolution, Austin. I will not live—but—Austin, law's the thing! Are not the big prizes in the law? Yes. Is not the law the road to fame? Yes, the stepping-stone to politics, the passport to power? Yes. What then do you think of the law?

Prostitution!

The expression as of an abrupt encounter struck upon the face of Matthew Brandt. It was not the shock of a blow. He lay back with his eyes closed. Once, twice, he opened them, partly raised himself, endeavoured to speak—then in silence he held out his hand.

I understand all that you have said, said Austin. I have told it to myself. How can I explain? I don't see my way. I am not a coward, but I shrink from the pollutions of intrigue. My life is bound in shallows, but I have looked upon death. . . . I feel now that I understand the desires of the dying Schiller. He wished to travel. An unrest is urging me to see more into life, peoples,

nations, tracts of the social life, grades, organizations, projects, commerce, intercourse. And Austin tried to talk of science. . . . I will go to Germany —

Austin, your talk is like a madman's. What fever eats you up? What freak is this?

No freak. But I had hoped that you would think well of me yet.

The father closed his eyes and lay back in deep meditation. A long silence ensued.

It might be. I don't know what to think. I have built up hopes on you, and even when you followed another course—Austin, he cried, seizing his hand as if by a sudden effort breaking through a barrier of reserve—The tears had gushed to Austin's eyes. He turned away—If I thought your aim was right—I don't know. . . . The hopes I've built up for years—H'm. These men of science have done great work—wonderful work. The old Red Sandstone—yes, that's a great work. Humboldt's Cosmos, wonderful work. But the man that devotes himself to the service of his country, with his talents,

his eloquence, his energy—that was my idea after all. There is something wonderful in all that to me, that I never could express, the way of the individual man, and the march of a mighty people, a nation! striving onward, striving onward, striving upward! Everything is before you in this young land—to raise the people to a higher level and give the world example of a great democracy!

Austin remained silent. The father after a pause in which he struggled in himself now spoke in a voice husky in its earnestness.

But these are not the great things after all, Austin. I'm near my death now. Hear my words and attend to them. My conception of the thing is greater, higher than you can ever have without the faith. Your learning is of no use there. I wish before I die to see you brought up to think of that. It is great. The great idea of the world sunk into sin by man's error, and saved by the love of God who gave His only begotten Son to sacrifice Himself for us. And He gave His charge to Peter when He said feed My sheep. And, on this rock I will build My

Church. And the Catholic Church was the only one then. It's the oldest,—*must* be right. Every word of the Mass, and every vestment and every ceremony has its meaning, that pictures the passion of our Lord. It has a great, a wonderful meaning. And to think that you would turn from that. To be a heretic!—the word nearly chokes me. Doesn't it make you think of what you've done. I have sometimes felt as if I could strike down, slaughter, crucify them all—and then when I think of the Lord, the Saviour, I feel as if I could endure ten thousand injuries, and still hold out my hands to them to come. And many a hundred times though I did not speak to you and hoped you would yet come round, I was always thinking of it. What have you got to say to that? What can you put in place of that? Think of it.

These words had prompted Austin's thoughts, but it was his own wild questionings that haunted him.

I have been always thinking of it. I have felt myself slain with the thoughts that have come upon me, and again I have felt a moving

of the spirit as if to eternal music.—Science is the plan, the map wherein is charted down the limits, and the ways, the measures, the scheme. It is not greatness that I must consider first but what is true. Greatness comes out of that. I have struggled for the spiritual needs—and now—

And now ?

And now I am beginning to find a solace and an explanation for that in science too.

Austin ! the arm dropped helplessly by the bed, the flush was gone, the face was deathly pale. Slowly he rallied, and his voice had a peculiar gentleness—No one could honour science more than I—but—material rules, in place of Faith. You cannot ever have known, Austin, what that means. Is it science that makes men put out to sea on stormy winter's nights, risking their lives, saving others they have never known ? Is it science that impels the mother to rush into the blazing house, braving a fearful death to save her infant sleeping in the cot ? Is it science that prompts one to support the poor wretch fainting by the wayside and bear his

load, and make him feel that the Saviour has died for him, and give him faith and wonderful hope again? Can science do that?

Let me speak, cried Austin.

No, no. That needs a higher prompting, the Faith. I was born in this Faith, but to a young man religion and religious duties often make a light impression. When I married your mother my thoughts were turned more seriously; and in every grief, in losses, disappointments, sickness,—death,—all that I have seen and lived through, this Faith has supported me and given me strength. It has been my constant hope and comfort and the deepest and highest feelings that I know have sprung from it. It is wonderful to a reverent mind. There's another and a greater meaning in life when the mind first knows what Faith means. Austin, I have not been used to speak to you like this, perhaps have neglected this too much, but I have watched your growth and when I saw your intellect expanding and your thoughts noble and your actions good—Oh Austin, you never guessed the depth of love

in your father's heart. Did you think me stern and cold and strict? Did you Austin? Did you think I did not love you, Austin?

The words came with a strange struggle, as though they had made irruption into speech. He trembled and sobbed.

Oh, no, no no, was all that Austin could say in his bitterness of grief.

Stern I was. I was too much of that. But everything belonging to you Austin, I treasured up in my mind and built my highest hopes on you. I thought you wayward—I blame myself—Yes, Austin, I was wrong—I was not enough a friend to you, I did not win your confidence. Austin, Austin, —If I could only tell you all.

He looked to Austin.

I am nearing my death, Austin. Hear me.  
. . . . Austin, Austin, hear me.

Austin had thrown himself upon his knees before the bed and taken his father's hand, and pressed it with kisses, while the tears were streaming from his eyes.

Oh, he sobbed out, I know it—I know all—but. Oh do not make me promise—do

not make me say what I cannot believe. I will think of all you've said and this hour will make it solemn to my mind—I will think of this with all the reverence of my mind. But—I will be true—I will encourage myself in every noble aim. I cannot say now. Oh do not force me—do not force me now.

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Austin's eyes were as though stone blind, he could not speak, but all through the night walked the old familiar walks, alone, till morning and the time of his departure had come.













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